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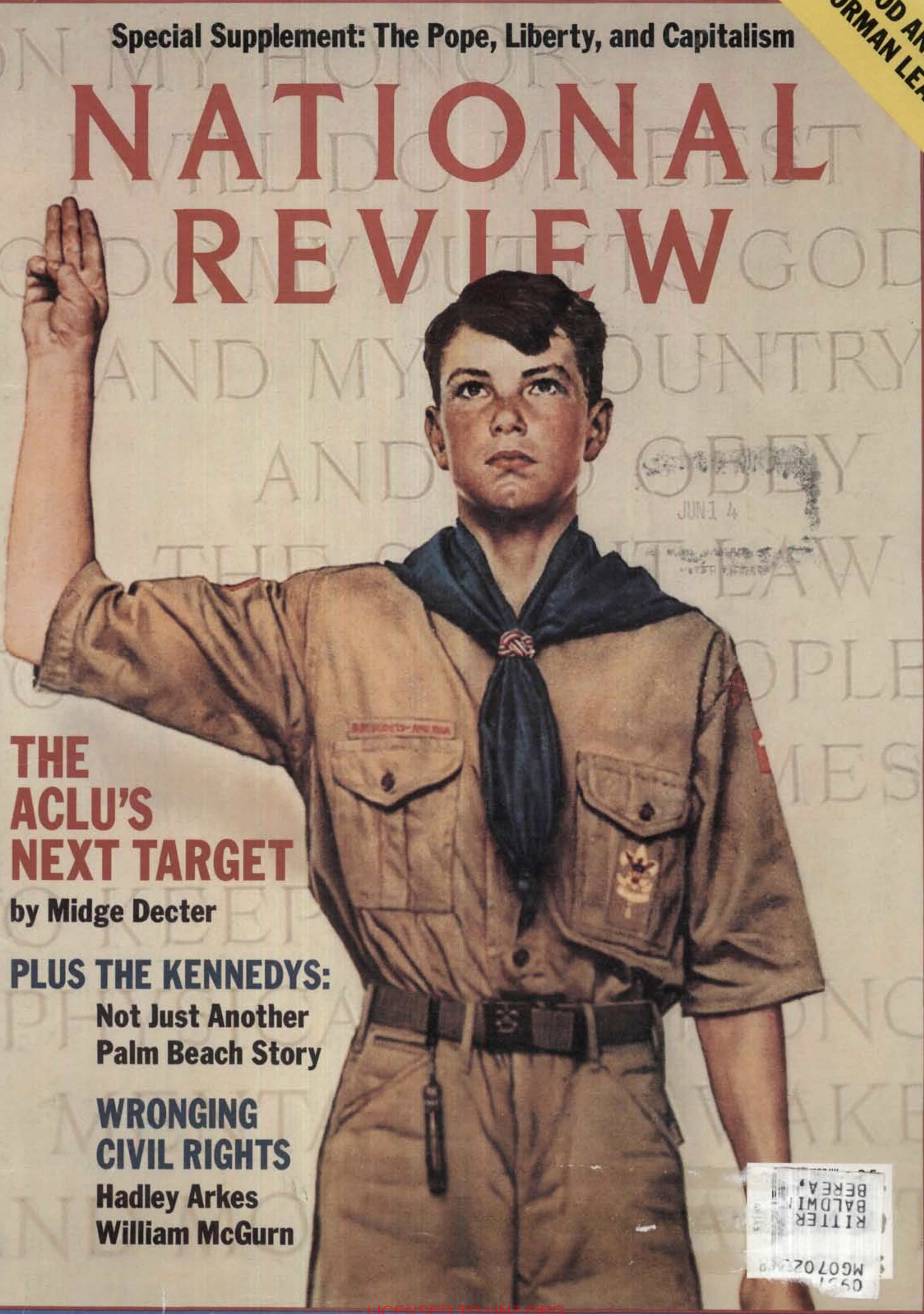
NATIONAL REVIEW


ON MY HONOR
I WILL DO MY BEST
TO DO MY DUTY TO GOD
AND MY COUNTRY
AND TO OBEY
THE SCOUT LAW

THE ACLU'S NEXT TARGET

by Midge Decter

PLUS THE KENNEDYS:

Not Just Another Palm Beach Story

WRONGING CIVIL RIGHTS

Hadley Arkes

William McGurn

JUN 1 4

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NATIONAL REVIEW

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The New Paradigm, Jim Pinkerton's blueprint for a conservative America, is in fact commendably old hat. What's more, says **Aram Bakshian Jr.**, opposition to "paradigms" is the main thing Americans *like* about conservatives.

Books, Arts & Manners

42 While Paul Johnson's *The Birth of the Modern: World Society 1815–1830* is an impressive feat of learning and a worthy portrait of how today's world was formed, **Joseph Sobran** would prefer a bit more humor and a lot more soul. . . . Should we tell ethnic jokes? Can we stop? **Henry Mitchell** reflects on Christie Davies's remarkable *Ethnic Humor around the World*. . . . The most poetic thing about the execrable *American Psycho*, remarks **Terry Teachout**, is the fate of Bret Easton Ellis's attempt to pander to the politically correct. . . . In *Sunday Dinner*, his newest sitcom, Norman Lear looks at religion as a part of American life; **Richard John Neuhaus** gives him credit for trying. . . . *Only the Lonely* is supposed to provoke warm laughs, and *Everybody's Fine* maudlin thoughts; **John Simon**'s response to both is a deep sigh.

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Illustration by Norman Rockwell

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The Audit Bureau

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NATIONAL TOUR

The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, April 14 – August 11, 1991
Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, September 28 – November 10, 1991
Wight Art Gallery, UCLA, Los Angeles, December 8, 1991 – February 2, 1992
High Museum of Art, Atlanta, February 25 – May 3, 1992
The Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, May 30 – July 26, 1992
National Museum of American Art, Washington, D.C., October 2, 1992 – January 3, 1993

The exhibition is organized by The Studio Museum in Harlem

She-Ba, 1970 Collage on board Wadsworth Athene

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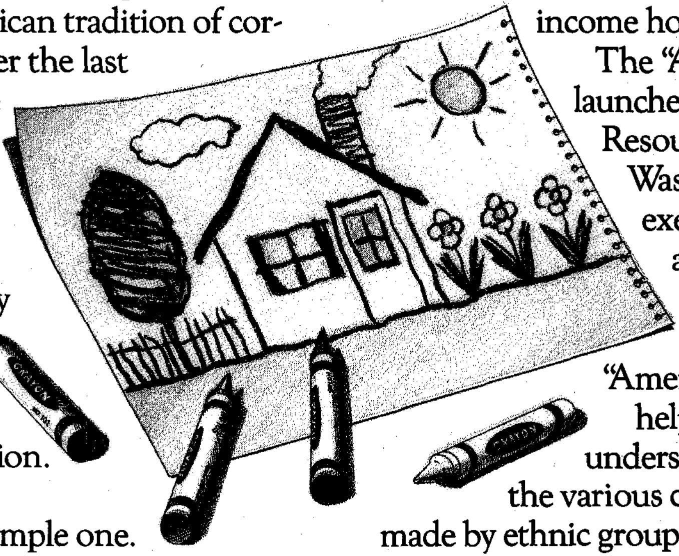

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The "Americans All" project launched by the Educational Resources Group in Washington, D.C., also exemplifies Hitachi's approach to giving. Through the study of immigration, "Americans All" seeks to help school children understand and appreciate the various contributions made by ethnic groups to American society. A two-year, $120,000 grant from The Hitachi Foundation is supporting a pilot "Americans All" project in San Diego.

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LETTERS

Trees and Gasses

I would think it incumbent upon someone writing under the heading "Right Data" in NATIONAL REVIEW to check the quantitative validity of what he sets forth. Regrettably, in his column for the April 29 issue, your economist Ed Rubenstein set forth a farrago of factoids. He writes of carbon dioxide, "Only a growing forest consumes this gas, however, so opening up more federal lands for private logging and reforestation would cleanse the atmosphere even more."

A mature tree can contain tens of tons of carbon and wolf down tons of carbon dioxide in a year; half of this biomass is bound in its root system. Cut a tree down, and in a decade those roots will be decomposed into CO_2 and often (via termites) a worse greenhouse gas, methane.

Meanwhile, the tree seedling planted to replace it will bind just ounces of CO_2 in its first few years and pounds in its first decade, taking generations to catch up with its predecessor. But since tree plantations are harvested long before then, Rubenstein's modest proposal to curb CO_2 by demolishing the biosphere fails the test of quantitative examination.

Since the earth was an incandescent ball of slag at the inception of geological history, I find it odd that he should characterize as "potentially dangerous" the "cooling trend that has been under way for most of the earth's history." Despite his nostalgia for the torrid epoch "one hundred million years ago" when "the average temperature was 9° F. to 18° F. warmer," that once and (I hope not) future climate was more amenable to dinosaurs.

Perhaps the most stunning evolutionary response to the shift toward modern geological times was the ascent of a certain warm-blooded group of critters called mammals, culminating (*Deo gratias*) in thee and me and Steve Gould and even those most exotic of semi-sentient beings, the creationists.

As an interested and (cf. "A War against Fire," *The National Interest*, Summer 1990) agnostic observer of the great greenhouse debate, it saddens me to see *NR* crashing through patches of scientific thin ice that might have been avoided.

Russell Seitz
Cambridge, Mass.

Had I been an environmental scientist reporting my own findings, I would have been abashed at Mr. Seitz's comments. As an economist, however, I can only assume that the scientific studies on which I base my articles have been vetted prior to publication. I am unable to judge for myself. But many scientists believe that the environmental movement, in its desire to promote government intervention, is responsible for most of the scientific demagogy in this field. —ER

Arrivederci

Sure, the official line is that Nika Hazelton's retirement ["Notes & Asides," May 13] is mandated by her doctor, but I personally know better. It's strictly due to remorse at never having acknowledged the superiority of my entries in her annual contests—never even a booby prize! Finally the guilt has ravaged her psyche, and, knowing she can never atone, she opts out of the fray. For shame!

But since that's the decision, Mrs. Hazelton, may you enjoy a long, gratifying, and fruitful retirement. In truth, I'll miss your contests, your warm, human articles, in which I, and surely a host of others, found relief from all the erudite, didactic dissertations. I will never forget your gracious personal reply, on a beautiful travel picture postcard, to one of my notes to you. Thank you for those years of pleasant reading. *Vita lunga e mille grazie.*

Gino Lucchetti
Oak Park, Ill.

Undue Process

The article "The Siege of Yonkers" [May 13] was read with interest and found the profile given to myself misleading and without fact.

As identifying "The Cast," you attribute my diminished zeal for continuing the legal battle against forcing low-income housing in the city of Yonkers as being the opinion of "some erstwhile allies." "The Cast" is again used with reference to the Save Yonkers Federation as being of the belief that I have caved into compliance. Not once have my votes as an elected official reflected this accusation or were a basis for such an opinion. Ironically, the inability of our outside counsel, Raymond Fitzpatrick, to emerge from court victorious has been translated as my acquiescence. In truth, Thomas DeRosa, my preferred representation, was following a conservative course of action that won a "stay." Still, his success was diminished only by the reputation of Raymond Fitzpatrick in Alabama—not his performance in Yonkers. Importantly, legal questions remain unanswered and a federal judge is deeming, at will, with a wave of his judicial powers, the destruction of the fourth largest city in New York State with no regard for due process.

Henry J. Spallone
Mayor
Yonkers, N.Y.

Hostages for Votes

I enjoyed Richard Brookhiser's review of how Ronald Reagan "stole the 1980 election" (or was it Elvis?) ["The Prequel," May 27]. I would like to add one extra point. On page 314 of *After the Fall*, Gary Sick noted that the Carter Administration offered $150 million worth of military spare parts to Iranians upon the release of the hostages. Mr. Sick notes that some of these parts could "potentially be quite important."

He adds that to make sure the Iranians got the message, Jimmy Carter alluded to this offer during the October 28 debate with Ronald Reagan when he stated: "If the hostages are released safely . . . we would make delivery on those items which Iran owns."

A logical question might be: If the Carter Administration was prepared to ship arms or military spare parts to Iran, why would the Iranians deal with Reagan, who was not President and who had no power to deliver those arms unless he was elected?

Thomas Donelson
Olathe, Kan.

A Question of Labels

You correctly note that certain gay militants have taken to preferring the label "queer," rather than "gay" ["The Week," April 29]. At the risk of further confusing the issue, I will offer my opinion. Perhaps I speak only for the sort of gay person who is a regular reader of NATIONAL REVIEW (some deem me queer for that reason alone), but as for me, "gay" is just fine.

Richard A. Banyard
Wayne, Pa.

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REVIEW

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FROM THE EDITOR

Beltway Shall Speak unto Beltway

■ Some years ago Tom Bethell revealed how he had overcome an odd embarrassment. He was often asked to write on "what people are saying at smart Georgetown dinner parties," but he was never invited to smart Georgetown dinner parties. What could he do?

Tom quickly dismissed the idea of actually getting invited to smart Georgetown dinner parties; he knew his limitations. Nor could he simply invent what went on; his imagination was not sufficiently threadbare.

Then he hit upon a brilliant idea. He would borrow the thoughts of a journalist whose writings encapsulated the Georgetown dinner party in all its deliberate impressiveness.

Tom zeroed in on Haynes Johnson of the *Washington Post*, whose opinions followed the party line more faithfully than Earl Browder. If he wrote that Washington was worried about the budget deficit (as he did from time to time), Tom would report that soufflés were collapsing all over Georgetown in inverse proportion to fiscal trends.

As time went by, Tom's reputation as a social lion rose all over the Midwest. For Mr. Johnson never let him down. So unerring was his reflection of party opinion that Tom even began to be invited out to dinner in Georgetown as well (hostesses assuming that anyone so well informed must be part of the social scene).

It was not until I read the memoirs of Hamilton Jordan, President Carter's chief of staff—well, okay, read a quote from them in a Michael Kinsley column—that I realized Tom's device was not wholly original. For Jordan writes of Robert Strauss, the former Democratic Party chairman just nominated by President Bush as U.S. ambassador to the Soviet Union: "It was always helpful for me to hear what Strauss was saying, because . . . his 'ideas' were more accurately an amalgam of the collective thoughts and opinions of the Washington political and media establishments."

So what lies behind Mr. Strauss's appointment? He speaks no Russian; he has no great knowledge of Russian or Soviet history; and on the one occasion Nexis recorded his opinion of Mikhail Gorbachev, following a 1987 White House dinner for him, Strauss showed something less than skepticism: "I was stunned by how much that evening moved me . . . I've only felt it once before, at the dinner for Sadat and Begin."

But perhaps Mr. Strauss's credentials as the voice of the establishment are the main point. For he is going to a capital even more detached than D.C. from the hopes and wishes of the people. He is less U.S. ambassador to the Soviet Union than the Beltway's ambassador to the *nomenklatura*.

His grasp of what the Washington establishment thinks will doubtless be of value to Mr. Gorbachev. But since the peoples of the Soviet empire are in growing rebellion against Moscow, is he the right man to advise Washington on what is likely to happen there?

Still, President Bush will be well informed on what they're saying at smart Moscow dinner parties.

■ My defense of Vladimir Bukovsky's right to smoke (and my right to drink) has elicited the usual squawks of protest, on the theme of "Don't you know you're ruining your health with all this boozing and passive smoking?"

Well, as George Orwell points out: "Health is not the only thing that matters: friendship, hospitality, and the heightened spirits and change of outlook that one gets by eating and drinking in good company are also valuable. I doubt whether, on balance, even outright drunkenness does harm, provided it is infrequent—twice a year, say. The whole experience, including the repentance afterwards, makes a sort of break in one's mental routine, comparable to a weekend in a foreign country, which is probably beneficial."

And as it happens, my doctor agrees with Orwell. —JOHN O'SULLIVAN

Today's most wanted list

THE SECRET PILGRIM JOHN LE CARRÉ
ADAMS V. TEXAS RANDALL ADAMS
JACK HIGGINS The Eagle Has Flown
The Lives of Mikhail S. Gorbachev THE MAN WHO CHANGED THE WORLD GAIL SHEEHY
BRAZZAVILLE beach WILLIAM BOYD
MAEVE BINCHY CIRCLE of FRIENDS
COLLEEN McCULLOUGH THE FIRST MAN IN ROME
THE TRIALS OF LIFE DAVID ATTENBOROUGH
THE NOVEL James A. Michener
FATHER MELANCHOLY'S DAUGHTER GAIL GODWIN
GUADALCANAL RICHARD B. FRANK
FIVE FOR HOLLYWOOD
Bully for Brontosaurus Stephen Jay Gould
MAO II Don DeLillo
THE WITCHING HOUR ANNE RICE
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Thomas M. Disch the M.D.
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A SEASON FOR JUSTICE MORRIS DEES
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JOSEPH CAMPBELL THE POWER OF MYTH
ALL I REALLY NEED TO KNOW I LEARNED IN KINDERGARTEN ROBERT FULGHUM
ROBERT FULGHUM IT WAS ON FIRE WHEN I LAY DOWN ON IT
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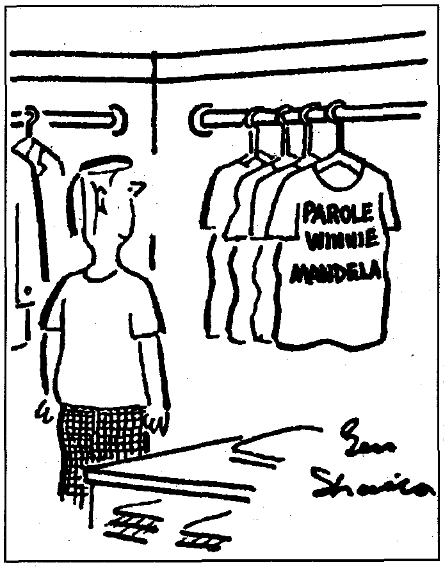
ON THE RECORD

■ There they go again. When **George McGovern** took himself out of 1992 presidential race, he named as his choices: Sens. **Tom Harkin** (Iowa) and **Robert Kerrey** (Neb.) and Gov. **Mario Cuomo** (N.Y.), all on left flank of party. **Evans & Novak** think Harkin could run well as favorite son in Iowa and emerge as candidate of the Left, but "that's not what the Democrats are supposed to be looking for this year." E&N see **Al Gore** (Tenn.) as front-runner at this moment, and **Douglas Wilder** (Va.) as possible first black on a national presidential ticket (in No. 2 spot). . . . Former DNC Chairman **Robert Strauss** doubts Cuomo will be a starter unless he can put his own budgetary house in order. . . . **Roper** political analyst **Everett Carll Ladd** thinks **George Bush** has very little to worry about, with May polls showing that two-thirds of Democrats approve his performance. "No modern President," says Ladd, "has looked so strong 18 months before election day." . . . ABC News analyst **Gary Langer**, looking at recent **Dan Quayle** polls, agrees U.S. public is not ready for Quayle Presidency, but points out his numbers are not all bad: 61 per cent give him high rating on knowledge of national issues, and 65 per cent say he stands up for his beliefs. However, only 36 per cent think Quayle is a good communicator.

■ It's three years off, but there's growing interest in challenge to **Ted Kennedy** in Massachusetts. Boston U. President **John Silber**, who has kept his 1990 campaign organization alive, hints he might take on Teddy next time around. . . . Others being mentioned: black U.S. Attorney **Wayne Budd**, a moderate Republican along the lines of **Edward Brooke**, black former GOP senator from Massachusetts; and deputy White House chief of staff **Andrew Card**. . . . In New York, former U.S. Attorney **Rudolph Giuliani** may pass up primary against embattled Sen. **Alfonse D'Amato** next year and run instead against Mayor **David Dinkins** in 1993. . . . Turns out that "**JFK** Democrat" **Harris Wofford**, appointed to **John Heinz**'s Pennsylvania Senate seat, is liberal on everything but abortion. Wofford, a Catholic convert, is solid pro-lifer, as is Democratic Gov. **Bob Casey**, who appointed him. . . . While Beltway conservatives, familiar with **Tom Pauken**'s strong stand as **Reagan**'s ACTION head, were sorry at Pauken's defeat in Texas congressional by-election, his successful opponent, **Sam Johnson**, is also a conservative. By-election was called when Rep. **Steve Bartlett** resigned to run for mayor of Dallas. . . . Connecticut's black Republican congressman, **Gary Franks**, who is not a member of far-left Black Caucus, has told *Hartford Courant* he's "the most conservative member of the Connecticut delegation," and that he is to the right of President Bush. . . . Fascinating vote on **Ron Dellums** amendment that would, in effect, have killed SDI. That the amendment, which everyone knew would fail, got support of most of Black Caucus surprised no one. But why did Majority Leader **Richard Gephardt** support it? Others voting to kill SDI—the amendment would have eliminated the Strategic Defense Initiative Organization—included Reps. **Patricia Schroeder** (Colo.), **Joseph Kennedy II** (Mass.), **Stephen Solarz** (N.Y.).



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■ Bad News, and Good: **ACT-UP**, the radical gay & lesbian organization, has scored victory over **Philip Morris**, which ended a year-long boycott of its products by promising to make "long-term financial commitments to the AIDS and Lesbian and Gay Communities," according to an ACT-UP press release. Philip Morris got on ACT-UP's blacklist by supporting **Jesse Helms**'s re-election campaign. . . . Swift passage in both Houses of Congress of President Bush's fast-track authorization to negotiate a free-trade agreement with Mexico is major blow to organized labor. **AFL-CIO** had brought its biggest guns to bear against fast track. . . . *Boston Globe* says Justice **David Souter** may sign Harvard Law School graduate **Peter Rubin** as law clerk. Rubin co-authored *Abortion: The Clash of Absolutes* with Harvard Law professor **Laurence Tribe**. . . . Financial-disclosure statement of Supreme Court Justice **William J. Brennan**, who retired last year, reveals that Brennan received $140,000 in gifts from real-estate developer **Charles E. Smith**, which included the forgiving of $120,000 of a $170,400 mortgage on a condominium Justice Brennan owns. . . . **Howard Phillips**, **Richard Viguerie**, **Frank Gaffney**, **Brent Bozell**, and other leaders of conservative groups in Washington have formed a Taxpayers Alliance against the Bailout of Communism to agitate on just that. . . . **Asia Watch**, joining battle against Most Favored Nation status for China, reports that since Tiananmen Square "China's prisons and labor camps hold more political prisoners than at any time since **Deng Xiaoping**'s rise to power in the late 1970s."

■ **The National Lesbian Conference** in Atlanta was a sore disappointment, composition-wise, to its organizers. Although the steering committee operated under "parity"—50 per cent people of color, 20 per cent disabled lesbians, 5 per cent elderly lesbians—the 2,400 participants who turned up, laments *Guardian* columnist **Carrie Wofford**, were "overwhelmingly . . . white, middle-aged, able-bodied." Woe, Wofford, Woffest.

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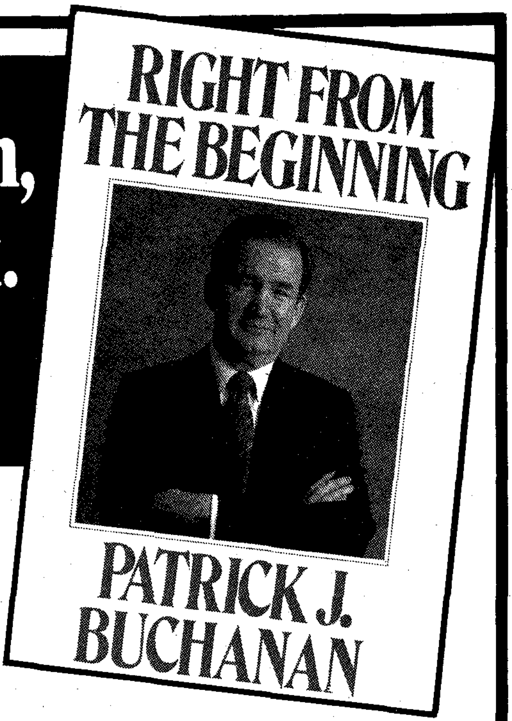

Pat Buchanan grew up in strange times. Mothers stayed home to raise the children, and no Phil Donahue putting sick ideas into their heads. Big Government meant the feds were spending $35 billion. Even the liberals wanted a strong America.

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THE WEEK

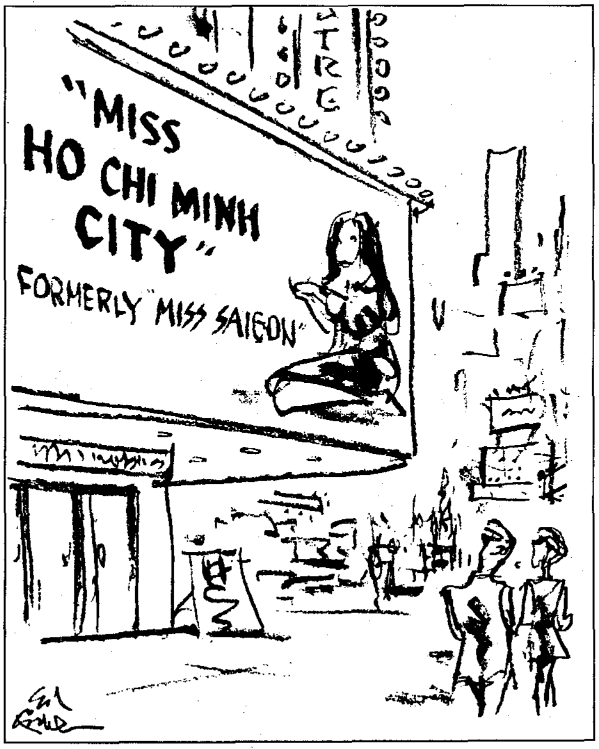
■ It has finally happened. President Bush has called a certain pending piece of legislation a "so-called" civil-rights bill. We shall overcome.

■ After much soul-searching, George McGovern has decided not to seek the Presidency next year. Laugh not. Though in 1972 he carried only Massachusetts and Washington, D.C., the country since then has been increasingly governed on his principles, albeit, under Reagan, the growth of McGovernment was somewhat retarded. In recognition whereof, why not rename the nation's capital in his honor? It seems more appropriate to say our money is going to McGovern than to Washington.

■ Congratulations! Your First Amendment rights have been expanded again! A Newark, N.J., federal judge has ruled that you can't be thrown out of a library just because you don't bathe and others don't happen to like the way you smell. This new beachhead of justice was secured by lawyers for the ACLU and Richard Kreimer, a homeless, jobless gent. "If we wish to shield our eyes and noses from the homeless," Judge H. Lee Sarokin ruled, "we should revoke their condition, not their library cards." Pretty snappy, your honor. But Mr. Kreimer has recently rejected—turned up his nose at, you might say—a job as a kitchen maintenance worker. Still, Judge Sarokin keeps making with the epigrams: "Society has survived not banning books which it finds offensive from its libraries; it will survive not banning persons whom it likewise finds offensive from its libraries." No doubt. But will it survive not banning Judge Sarokin?

■ In New York, a federal appeals court throws out the conviction of E. Robert Wallach and two other defendants in the Wedtech case. The prosecution, says the court, should have known that its key witness in the case was a perjurer. And so, four years after the beginning of the ordeal, Wallach and his two codefendants, who faced prison terms, may be in the clear. It is doubtful that the government will pursue the case further, inasmuch as it was brought in the first instance by a politically ambitious U.S. attorney for political reasons. The real target was Ed Meese, a longtime California friend of Bob Wallach's; the ultimate target was the Reagan Administration. Those targets are no longer center stage, and the ambitious U.S. attorney has faded from the scene, and so a second trial is unlikely. But where does that leave Bob Wallach, whose assets were seized under the pernicious RICO statute, whose law practice was destroyed, and who was brought to such financial straits that Robert Bork argued his appeal pro bono? Like Ray Donovan, Reagan's beleaguered Labor Secretary who was ultimately cleared of criminal charges sometime after his forced resignation from the Cabinet, Bob Wallach can ask: "The question is: Should this indictment have been brought in the first place? Which office do I go to to get my reputation back?"

■ The collapse of the hateful Marxist–Leninist regime of Colonel Mengistu in Ethiopia is welcome both strategically and morally. Strategically, it represents, along with the ceasefire accord in Angola, the end of Brezhnev-era Soviet adventurism in Africa. In Ethiopia, the United States did not aid the rebels, because of their secessionist aims and their own Marxist–Leninist philosophy. But others did, and the Soviets, beset by internal crises, washed their hands of the country. The United States —now seen in Africa as the only superpower—was sought out by all sides as the credible intermediary to arrange the transfer of power. Morally, this means a chance for that poor, benighted country to join the world community. The problems are massive: miserable poverty, ethnic divisions, and the ideological immaturity of the new rulers, whose pledges to institute free elections and free enterprise are not entirely convincing. A country whose name has been synonymous with famine and backwardness deserves something better. Our resources are limited, but our influence must be exerted to give it a chance.



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The Road to the White House

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92 ELECTION

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- Why lend money to Gorbachev? We could eliminate the middleman and give the money directly to Castro.

- Should foreigners with AIDS be excluded from entering the United States? Current policy bars aliens having "a communicable disease of public-health significance" from getting visas, and lists AIDS, gonorrhea, syphilis, and infectious tuberculosis as communicable diseases. HHS Secretary Louis Sullivan proposed taking AIDS and the venereal diseases off the list, on the grounds that they are not passed by casual contact. We see Dr. Sullivan's point. But would he have acted if AIDS were not associated with a) a minority group and b) sex? (We assume that gonorrhea and syphilis were just along for the ride.) For enlightened opinion tends to assume that: aa) when government acts in any way that impinges on a minority, no matter how universal its concerns —medical expenses, health—it is attacking that minority, and hence violating its "rights"; and bb) one of the activities which must be safeguarded for all, in the manner of a true right, is sex—as if orgasms were what Jefferson had in mind when he wrote about the pursuit of happiness. If, after due deliberation, Dr. Sullivan decides that AIDS and venereal disease are not of "public-health significance," will he please call the New York City public-school system, so it can save money on condom classes?

- Who killed JFK? If we are to believe filmmaker Oliver Stone, the assassination was "a coup d'état" ordered by "a shadow government consisting of corrupt men at the highest levels of the Pentagon, the intelligence establishment, and the giant multinational corporations," covered up by "like-minded individuals in the Dallas police department, the Secret Service, the FBI, and the White House." Thus a draft of the screenplay of Stone's *JFK*, quoted by the *Washington Post*'s George Lardner Jr. Wow. But *why* did they kill JFK? Lyndon Johnson, it seems, wished to pursue more vigorously the war in Vietnam, which the sainted JFK was trying to end. And *how* did they kill JFK? Stone, in a response to Lardner, defends the hypothesis of seven shots from three different locations. (Acoustics experts who have studied the case admit the *possibility* of *four* shots.) Has Stone OD'd on *The Manchurian Candidate*? Not really. He's just another Hollywood liberal infatuated with the Sixties and with Kennedy, and who thinks that national politics are conducted on the same principles as Hollywood studios.

- The *Wall Street Journal* reports that a restaurant in Canton, China, is scoring a hit with a new line of meat dishes, featuring rat. The thirty new dishes include Lemon Deep Fried Rat, German Black Pepper Rat Knuckle, Nest of Snake and Rat, and, for the cholesterol-conscious, charcoal-broiled Rat Kabob. Entrees range from only $4 to $6 and go best with red wine. Alas, we have no immediate plans to report from Canton for our "Delectations" column.

- THE NEXT GENERATION: Bella Abzug's daughter, running for City Council in New York, has announced she is a lesbian.

Nothing Strenuous, Mr. Bush

There's no need to respond like James Bond
When, submerging two times in a pond,
    Mr. Gorbachev's heard
    Going down for a third,
If one doesn't feel frightfully fond.

W. H. VON DREELE

Watching Walsh

IRAN-CONTRA Special Prosecutor Lawrence Walsh has now served in that position for a longer term than all but two attorneys general of the United States. Nor is there any apparent end in sight as Mr. Walsh and his 55-lawyer team continue their four-and-a-half-year prosecution of a single case. The estimated cost of their efforts to date is $40 million, the operating budget for six or seven years for a big-city U.S. attorney's office prosecuting a full range of drug kingpins, firearms felons, Mafiosi, corrupt politicos, Ponzi-scheme artists, money launderers, counterfeiters, insider traders, and moonshiners.

Mr. Walsh has yet to secure his first significant conviction. The U.S. Supreme Court last week let stand a federal-appeals-court ruling which overturned Oliver North's conviction because it may have been infected by testimony from witnesses exposed to North's congressional testimony. John Poindexter's conviction faces similar appellate review. A trial judge must now assess the testimony of prosecution witnesses "line by line, fact by fact, incident by incident, and witness by witness" to identify any taint from North's congressional testimony.

While any normal Justice Department prosecutor would now be compelled to focus his attentions upon other cases—indeed, any normal prosecutor would have recognized the futility of prosecuting an immunized defendant in the first place—Lawrence Walsh has no other cases. Walsh has promised that the North prosecution will continue, and rumors in Washington promise further indictments of relatively low-level CIA operatives.

Ordinary Justice Department prosecutors are restrained in a variety of ways by internal rules and guidelines, by budgetary and personnel limits, by lines of authority, by the press of competing cases, and by an institutional "conscience." In contrast, the Perpetual Prosecutor has no sense of these limits, no sense of knowing when to stop. Such a prosecutor is particularly dangerous in a society such as ours, overrun by rules and regulations, in which many good and decent people would find themselves "felons" if they were to have personally and perpetually assigned to them a prosecutor free to roam their lives and the United States Code for potential criminal offenses. As Walsh's former assistant, Jeffrey Toobin, wrote recently in a book that Walsh sought unsuccessfully to ban, prosecutors "thinking broadly put all of us at peril."

There is no apparent purpose to Walsh's continuing the prosecution other than personal obsession with North or unrestrained self-justification. As a Washington pundit has said, Walsh "should quit now that he is behind." But the case will continue, as will: the lease on the special counsel's suite of offices in Washington's most expensive commercial property; the counsel's access to a round-the-clock limousine and driver; his use of a luxurious apartment at the Watergate; and his command over a staff of young lawyers so numerous that, recently, they held their first alumni meeting. A re-appeal probably cannot be scheduled until early next year, but at least that will leave plenty of time to prepare. Patience is in order, and perhaps a few more million dollars beyond the $40 million or so spent already, but such are the costs of bringing to justice those who would abuse their public offices.

Not Such Junk

AFTER A ROCKY 1990—the Drexel bankruptcy and the onset of recession didn't help—many junk-bond issues are worth 50 per cent more today than at the start of this year. Of course, wide swings in value must be expected in a security noted for its riskiness. However, over the past five years, total returns from junk bonds have averaged 8.277 per cent, versus 8.273 per cent on short-term U.S. Government paper.

It turns out, moreover, that the hostile takeovers, leveraged buyouts, and other mega-deals of the Eighties were more than just get-richer-quicker schemes for Michael Milken and his investment-banker friends. Economist Glenn Yago studied corporate performance before and after leveraged buyouts and found substantial gains in total sales, sales per employee, operating income, and capital spending within two years of the buyout. Indeed, the entire economy benefited when sleepy corporate managements were forced to restructure and improve efficiency under the threat of takeovers. Commerce Department figures show that between 1979 and 1990, when America's competitiveness was supposedly threatened by an orgy of corporate debt, manufacturing productivity grew by more than 3.5 per cent per annum—twice West Germany's rate—and the share of U.S. GNP deriving from manufacturing rose from 20 per cent in 1982 to 23 per cent in 1990. There were mistakes—the Campeau and TWA deals spring to mind—in which perfectly healthy companies succumbed to burdensome debt loads incurred to acquire other companies. But the ratio of debt to corporate equity is lower today than it was in the mid 1970s, and lower in the U.S. than in West Germany and Japan. In part this is because of a $3-trillion-plus increase in the market value of corporate stocks since 1970, much of it made possible by the restructuring financed by high-yield securities.

Before Michael Milken, the high-yield-bond market was the final resting place for securities of bankrupt corporations. His genius turned it into a financial breeding ground for start-up companies. The transformation gave the 95 per cent of American corporations that are too small, too new, or too unknown for investment-grade credit ratings (including nearly every company run by a minority member, a recent immigrant, or a woman) access to credit markets for the first time in history.

But this ferment didn't sit well with the comfortable beneficiaries of the status quo. Regulators, for example, after turning a blind eye to the problems of the S&L industry, seized the chance to blame junk bonds for the ensuing debacle. Congress bought their line and passed a law requiring thrifts to get rid of what the General Accounting Office once declared were among the best investments S&Ls were allowed to make. More recently, state regulators have urged laws to limit junk-bond holdings of insurance companies, pension funds, and even mutual funds.

It's hard to keep a good thing down—the rebound in the junk-bond market proves that. Unfortunately, until the absurd stigma hanging over them is somehow removed, junk bonds are unlikely to lead the nation to economic recovery in the Nineties.

Right of Subsidy

SOMEWHERE along the line, the vaunted constitutional "right to privacy" became intertwined with not-so-private questions of taxpayer funding of abortions, fetal research, and abortion referral clinics. The Supreme Court, in upholding federal regulations barring financing for the clinics, made clear that, whatever the limits of the "privacy" right, the people through their representatives retain the authority to decide which programs and activities merit public dollars.

What constitutional principles could possibly justify the government's inability to place rules on how federal money is spent? Justice Blackmun, in dissent, accused the Congress of seeking not merely to avoid using federal funds to finance abortions but—even more nefarious—to "reduce the incidence of abortion." All this was in apparent violation of the First, Fifth, Fourteenth, and other amendments which he seems to imagine establish a constitutional Right of Subsidy.

Planned Parenthood, which receives an estimated $37 million annually in federal family-planning funds, now threatens to turn down these dollars if the government insists on restricting their use. A porno artist issued a similar ultimatum last year to the National Endowment for the Arts—and the NEA backed down in the face of such a terrifying prospect. Here, President Bush and HHS Secretary Louis Sullivan show no similar propensity.

No private body can dictate the terms on which it accepts federal funds. If Planned Parenthood cannot subscribe to these not very stringent conditions, it should be removed from the public dole, and if that requires a presidential veto of legislation passed by an abortion-happy Congress, so be it.

No Bargain

IT HAS never been more clear that the Soviet Union is descending rapidly down the far side of its historical trajectory of power. Perhaps the most eloquent testimony to this is the attempts being made by Grigory Yavlinsky, a reform economist, and Yevgeny Primakov, a Gorbachev aide, to work out (with the help of Harvard professors) a "grand bargain," according to which the West would prop up the Soviet system for years to come. In its various versions, the bargain calls for anywhere from $30 to $250 billion in Western aid in return for structural economic reform, of which we have only seen vague promises so far.

The Soviet system has always been a form of organized looting, and under conditions of reform, it has not lost this character. It started by looting its own people and territory. It went on to feed off the countries that the Soviet Union occupied, or those to which Communism spread. Now, in the crepuscular atmosphere of the *fin de régime*, it is looking hungrily to the last great source of untapped money and resources, the capitalist West.

President Bush has reportedly softened the U.S. opposition to Gorbachev's attendance at the Group of Seven summit meeting in London in July. He is also said to be considering new trade and credit concessions to the Soviet Union—though these fall far short of the proposed "bargain." It is likely that if the Soviet economy enters genuine free fall before the end of the year, the pressure—particularly from our French and German allies—to get involved will increase. But the temptation to "help Gorbachev," now that he is ostensibly back on the path of reform, must be resisted. The very fact that the Soviet authorities, with the richest natural resources in the world, are looking to the West to give them massive aid while hesitating, so far, to initiate serious structural change is all the proof one needs that they have their priorities wrong. Western aid to the present Soviet system will only make genuine change slower and more painful.

The West should continue to put the onus where it belongs—on the central Soviet authorities to create the moral and political conditions for a free and productive economy to operate. This must include freedom for subject peoples, true devolution of political and economic authority, acceptance of private property, dismantling of the socialist economic structure and the Communist political structure that sustains it, and a verifiable reduction of the vast military–industrial complex.

We should, meanwhile, be considering more limited steps consistent with our interests, such as genuinely humanitarian aid (where we can be sure it gets to those intended), or technical advice for the Soviet food-distribution system or for the conversion from military to civilian production. Help that goes beyond that will subsidize not reform, but resistance to reform.

Mr. Bush Smells an Issue

Q is for Quota, a troublesome word
Bothering Democrats trying to herd
Blacks into business without shooing whites
Out of their party election-eve nights.

W. H. VON DREELE

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forces as well. The gist of the changes is this: a larger proportion of NATO will now be placed in a rapid-reaction corps, possibly under British command; a second tranche of forces composed of both active and reserve units will serve as immediate reinforcements for the Central Front; a third component will be American troops scheduled to reinforce Europe from the United States. Today, NATO army corps are pretty much organized by nationality, but in the future they will be multi-national, a German and a Belgian division working together, for example.

This is all sensible enough on the face of it; but it does not represent truly major change, or answer the critical questions of European security: What kind of security guarantee should NATO extend to the struggling democracies of Eastern Europe, and against what kinds of threats? How should NATO be prepared to react to the possible disintegration of the Soviet Union? Should NATO be prepared to act in the event of a Yugoslav civil war? And so on.

There are no easy answers to these problems, but we wish that there was greater recognition, at home and abroad, that they exist. Most of the grand ideas for reform—building a "European pillar" of equal standing with the U.S.—are likely to undermine NATO rather than strengthen it. The Gulf War suggests on the one hand that some European states are

RIGHT DATA

Fast Track, Sí!

AMERICAN labor leaders insist that a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with Mexico—which seems nearly inevitable now that President Bush has "fast track" negotiating authority—will increase corporate profits and reduce U.S. employment. They are only half right.

An FTA would be the latest in a series of trade moves that have increased employment on both sides of the Rio Grande. Since 1985 Mexico has lowered its tariffs from an average of 30 per cent to 10 per cent. As a result U.S. exports to Mexico nearly tripled, rising from $11.9 billion in 1986 to $28.4 billion in 1990. (In 1988 Mexico replaced West Germany as our third largest trading partner, behind Canada and Japan.) Every $1 billion of exports creates an additional 22,800 jobs, so the expansion in trade with Mexico over the past few years created 376,000 jobs that would not exist otherwise.

Even at 10 per cent, Mexican tariffs are still considerably higher than the U.S. average of 4 per cent. Major areas of trade, including electronic equipment, steel, and textiles, are still subject to restrictive quotas. The mutual elimination of these barriers under an FTA would enable the U.S. to increase its non-oil trade surplus with Mexico, creating still more jobs in this country.

Perhaps the best way to gauge an FTA's likely impact is to look at areas where free trade between the two nations already exists. Under the border plant or *maquiladora* program, introduced in 1965, U.S.-made components are shipped duty free to U.S.-owned subsidiaries in Mexico, where they are assembled and re-exported, also duty free, back to the United States. Since 1986 the number of Mexicans employed in the plants has doubled to 460,000. The *maquiladoras* now provide about one-fifth of all manufacturing jobs in Mexico.

The big draw for U.S. companies is cheap labor: a $12-an-hour job in the U.S., burdened with Social Security taxes and health benefits, can be done for between $1.50 and $2 an hour in Mexico. Some low-skilled U.S. workers have undoubtedly been displaced by Mexican labor. But by allowing American businesses to cut costs, the southern migration has saved a hundred thousand jobs in directly export-related industries, and created perhaps twice as many jobs in industries like warehousing, real estate, and transportation. While most of the jobs are in Arizona, California, New Mexico, and Texas, even in non-border states like Michigan and Illinois, workers manufacture components for assembly in Mexico.

Labor leaders assert that an FTA will induce U.S. firms to expand the scope of their Mexican operations beyond the benign *maquiladoras*. They forget that the current restrictions on U.S. investment in Mexico simply divert U.S. investment to more distant Third World countries, with far more deleterious effects for U.S. labor. A recent analysis by the International Trade Commission notes that when U.S. companies transfer operations to Mexico most of their work force remains in the U.S., particularly high-paying jobs in administration, sales, management, and component manufacturing. A move to Asia or Europe, on the other hand, results in a loss of high-paying production jobs as well as low-skilled assembly work.

An FTA would also ameliorate another labor bogeyman: illegal immigration. More than 1.05 million Mexicans cross the border every year in search of employment. Increased job opportunities such as would occur in the aftermath of an FTA may be the only way to stem the illegal influx of Mexicans. —ED RUBENSTEIN willing to pitch in on a common effort. But it also revealed that when they do so it is not likely to be in a unified way—and that it will only happen at all in response to strong U.S. leadership. Changing the composition of NATO's military commands is a useful exercise, but reorganization does not a strategy make. The West is drifting into a geopolitical complacency which the real problems of post-1989 Europe may one day rudely disturb.

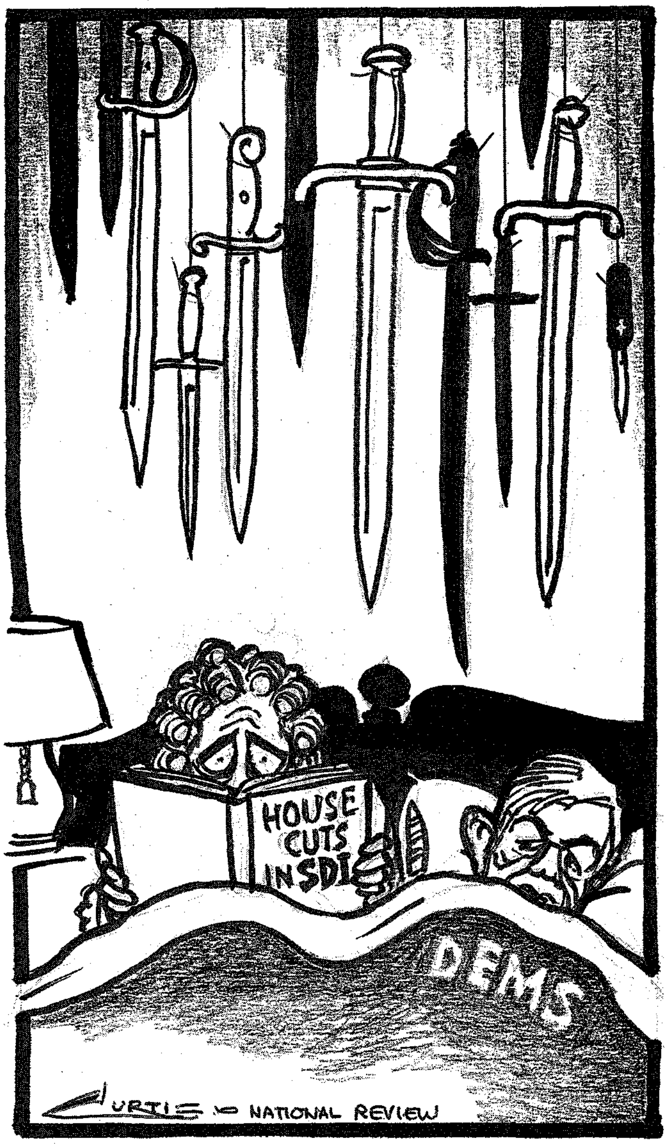
The I-Y Syndrome

DURING INDIA'S recent presidential election, Rajiv Gandhi, the former prime minister, was blown to bits on the campaign trail. Suspicion has focused on extremist Tamils, a restive southern ethnic group. They are not India's only unhappy minority. Discontent has flared into terrorism or outright warfare in Nagaland, Assam, Kashmir, and, most seriously, among the Sikhs in the Punjab. (Rajiv's mother, Indira, was assassinated by Sikh bodyguards.) Halfway across Eurasia, a smaller country, Yugoslavia, finds itself plagued with the same large problems, as Slovenes, Croats, Macedonians, and Albanians try to fight free of a central government dominated by Serbs.

The time-honored approach of America (that is to say, of the State Department) toward these problems has been to hope that they would be settled in the context of national unity. That hope has been expressed, not just in fine phrases, but in foreign aid, Most Favored Nation trading status, and easy terms from international lending institutions, all directed to (and thus bolstering) the central governments in New Delhi and Belgrade. The rationale behind our actions was partly inertial, but partly democratic: a faith that free debate and representative government will allow the conflicting interests of patchwork societies to be adjusted as they are in homogeneous nations from Western Europe to Japan.

But India has been a democracy for four decades, and Yugoslavia's post-Communist referendums have heightened tensions, not lessened them. The chaos in these countries suggests that the consent of the governed, to which Jefferson appealed, cannot meaningfully be obtained in multi-lingual agglomerations. How can people be on speaking terms with each other when they can't speak to each other?

The better alternative to polyglot nation-states is to let the most stubborn minorities—which feel themselves to be nations—go their own way, within a common free-trade area. Whatever central government remains should allow local autonomy. The cops can wear the same uniforms, so long as they have fewer laws to enforce.



"Just turn out the light and go to sleep!"

The I-Y Syndrome has obvious lessons for Soviet reformers, struggling with their own ethnic problems. It should have lessons for American supporters of bi-lingualism, intent on giving us a problem which does not as yet exist.

Kieran O'Doherty, R I P

KIERAN O'DOHERTY was the co-founder of New York State's Conservative Party. He had a distinguished academic career, summa cum laude from CCNY, and an honors graduate of the law school at Columbia.

Kieran was the first person to run for governor on the Conservative Party ticket. When in 1966 he ran for lieutenant governor, the Conservative Party surpassed the Liberal Party, to be listed on Row C, where it has reposed ever since, very nearly making Row B in 1990 when the Republican candidate ran so poorly, and the Conservative Party endorsed Herbert London.

Kieran O'Doherty eased away from New York politics soon after the senatorial victory of James L. Buckley in 1970. He married, and took a job with the Federal Government. All of New York City seemed decompressed by his departure, so fervent a figure was he in the City's politics, so enthusiastic an engine in the Conservative Party, which he turned over to Daniel Mahoney, the party's co-founder, and his brother-in-law. There never was a happier man than Kieran O'Doherty when the Conservative Party made a good showing.

His sad death at age 64, after an unsuccessful heart transplant, leaves a grieving family and friends, and a movement he did so very much to forward and to inspirit. The editors of NATIONAL REVIEW extend their condolences to his wife, his brother, and his two sisters. —WFB

NOTES & ASIDES

■ Dear Mr. Buckley:

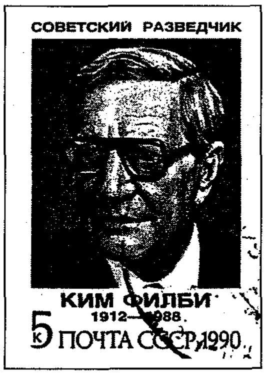
In the light of the current popularity of the term "African-Americans" and the fact that it is only one term in the search for a politically correct expression, I would like to suggest the next logical step. Keeping in mind Nicholas Davidson's article "Was Socrates a Plagiarist?" (*NR*, Feb. 25), I nominate the term "sub-Saharan-American" to be a more accurate and historically correct title.

Yours truly,
Paul Caldwell
Eugene, Ore.

■ Dear Mr. Buckley:

Attached is a copy of an envelope I got in the mail from a Russian penpal. I thought you might find the stamp of interest.

The stamp clearly and unabashedly commemorates "Soviet intelligence officer KIM PHILBY, 1912–1988."



I suppose the mainstream press would explain this issue's evident conflict with the new atmosphere of "openness and cooperation" in U.S.–Soviet relations by saying it was printed by hard-liners in the Soviet postal service *without Gorbachev's knowledge.*

Yuk, yuk!

James Kirchner
Grosse Pointe, Mich.

Dear Mr. Kirchner: Very interesting. In the good old days, we'd issue a stamp with a pix of Brezhnev, with the caption, "U.S. intelligence officer Leonid Brezhnev, 1964–1982." The idea has infinite possibilities. Cordially, WFB

■ Dear Mr. Buckley:

In re James R. McCarthy's criticism of your lack of interest regarding John Lennon's "contribution" ("Notes & Asides," Feb. 25).

It is humorous to note that Lennon's lectures via that whine, "Imagine" (I cannot bear to call it a song), were unable to benefit the Beatles. Their own inability to resolve the differences among the four of them landed them in court in 1971. Of course, they broke up, never to join up again. Now we are asked to take that goofy stuff Lennon wrote and apply it to world problems. If it didn't work for four people, well, let's give failure (another) chance.

Best,
Patricia Merrill
Los Angeles, Calif.

Dear Miss Merrill: Imagine! Cordially, WFB

■ Dear Mr. Buckley:

I recently had an opportunity to charter in the Windward Islands, my first experience sailing in the tropics, where the water is warm enough to afford comfortable swimming. A lawyer and sailing companion here in Thunder Bay loaned me his copy of *Racing through Paradise* to take on this adventure.

I boarded a flight from Minneapolis to Miami. Out came the book. The plane was about half full. The Gulf War and the economy had diminished the annual migration of Northerners to the South. Two seats to my left, a businessman worked on his laptop computer. About halfway through the flight I had to use the head. I looked for something to mark my page and in the seat pocket found a "barf bag," which provided a thoroughly adequate bookmark. I excused myself as I passed in front of the businessman. A few minutes later I reclaimed my seat, picked up the book, and placed the bookmark on the empty seat between me and my fellow traveler. He looked at me with a smile and said: "William F. Buckley?"

"Yes," I responded, with unusual eloquence.

The businessman looked down at the vomit bag and offered: "Yeah, I usually keep one of those things handy when I am reading his work."

I gather that he shared an affinity neither with your politics nor with your love of sailing.

Sincerely,
William Dunlop
Thunder Bay, Ont.
Canada

Dear Mr. Dunlop: You missed the ideal opportunity to get airsick. Cordially, **—WFB**

ON THE SCENE

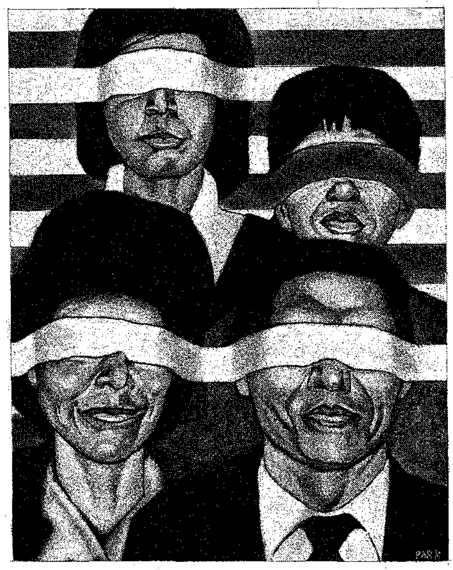
The Silent Minority

WILLIAM McGURN

SAN DIEGO

IT'S 7:30 this bright Friday morning outside the War Memorial Building here, and Marianne Green is ready. In just a few hours 100 to 150 immigrants, largely of Asian descent, will be sworn in as American citizens in the Memorial's auditorium. Mrs. Green, a campaign volunteer for Representative Duncan Hunter and the California GOP, hopes to convince these new Americans to become new Republicans too. So she's out here every Friday morning to greet the latest batch as they arrive for the weekly ceremony. "New citizens always get here early because they want to make sure they are in the right place," she says. "So this is prime time for us."

If Mrs. Green does not get them before they go in, another set of volunteers—whose travel expenses Hunter picks up out of his own pocket—help indirectly during the registration period that follows the swearing-in ceremony. Although the political parties are banned from lobbying inside, many of the volunteers assisting the new citizens to register come from conservative outfits such as Pro America. Prima David, a Filipino-American whose three brothers fought with the U.S. armed forces in the Persian Gulf, tells me the drill. "Once we explain that there are two major parties in the United States, and that one is the Republican Party, whose leader is President Bush, and that the other is the Democratic Party, whose leader was Michael Dukakis, most people say they want to be Republicans," she says sweetly. Well, when you put it that way.



Chang Park

Already Hunter's outreach to Asian-Americans has brought at least one concrete gain. In the last three years or so, Miss David and her cohort have brought in at least four thousand new members to San Diego County's Republican Party. That paid off in November when conservative GOP challenger Duke Cunningham ousted liberal Democratic incumbent Jim Bates in the heavily ethnic 44th congressional district where Hunter had set up a Republican Filipino community center. Given that Cunningham won by a mere 1,665 votes, you might say he owed his victory to Prima David.

In short, a little grassroots effort goes a long way—a message Duncan Hunter has been trying to sell in vain to the Beltway Republicans. Despite a proven track record in recruiting both Asians and Hispanics, the only funding Hunter's programs have received from Washington was a one-time $3,000 check funneled through the California state party by the Republican National Committee. At a time when they should be reaping a registration harvest, national Republican organizations are spending all their time and money wondering how to appeal to people who already agree with them. "Look, we don't have to convince these people about Republican virtues and the American dream," says Hunter. "They came here because they already believed in these things. All we need to do is invite them in."

TRUE ENOUGH, there are plenty of differences among Asian-Americans, but there are certain common threads that create a natural affinity for Republican principles. Many Asian-Americans, particularly Koreans and Chinese, own small businesses. Some are refugees from Communism, like the Vietnamese, well aware who lost them their homeland. Then there are the Filipinos, many of whom have come here via the U.S. military and are fiercely pro-defense. And almost all of them boast strong families, a not uncoincidental factor in their economic success.

Precisely because Asian-Americans are making it in their adoptive land, they hold the potential not only to add to Republican rolls but to define a bona-fide American language of civil rights. Today we have only one language of civil rights, and it is inextricably linked to government intervention, from racial quotas to set-aside government contracts. It is also an exclusively black-establishment language, where America's myriad other minorities are relegated to second-class citizenship.

"The black leadership has dominated the discussion," says former Mayor Ed Koch, who refuses to refer to the Democrats' current legislative proposal as a "civil rights" bill. "The Asian-Americans, because all they ask for is to be treated equally, have not played a part in this discussion."

Indeed, Asian-Americans suffer all the disadvantages of minority status with none of the benefits. Take quotas. Representative Dana Rohrabacher (R., Calif.) cites form letters from the prestigious Berkeley Law School informing applicants that they were on the bottom half of the Asian waiting list—the words "bottom" and "Asian" typed into blank spaces. The week I am here the *San Diego Union* runs a story on how a Filipino high-school senior ranked at the top of her class with a better-than-perfect 4.5 grade-point average was not accepted to Berkeley, while others in her class with lower test scores and

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Mr. McGurn is NR's *Washington bureau chief.*

GPAs were admitted. As Congressman Rohrabacher points out, "When you get into the business of allocating by race, one man's floor will turn out to be another man's ceiling." Yet for all that, this year Asian-Americans supplanted whites as the largest group of incoming freshman at UCLA.

Hate crimes, you say? Well, when blacks are attacked by whites it's front-page news. But how many know that Asian-Americans have been killed for their skin color in Detroit, North Carolina, and Houston? When blacks began to boycott a Korean-owned grocery store in Brooklyn last year (with demonstrators shouting "Chink" and activist Sonny Carson telling fellow blacks "not to shop with people who don't look like us"), the *New York Times* didn't get around to reporting the story until almost three months later. It goes without saying that not a single elected Republican visited the beleaguered store in a show of support.

This will probably change as politicians wake up to the demographics. Although Asian-Americans account for only 3 per cent of the nation's population, that figure is double what it was in 1980 and is still growing. The 1990 Census further reveals that Asian-Americans now outnumber blacks in ten states (California, Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Utah, Washington) and are about even with them in three (Wyoming, South Dakota, North Dakota). They outnumber Hispanics in three (Maryland, Alaska, Hawaii) and are about even with them in ten (Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, North Dakota, Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia). A full 39 per cent of Asian-Americans reside in California, the most electorally significant state in the Union.

When they speak, moreover, they do so in terms of opportunity, all the more striking because it comes so naturally. When Nancy Kwan, perhaps the best-known Asian-American actress, gives a speech, how different are her words from those of the civil-rights establishment! Instead of set-asides she speaks of "the tradition of family" as "the cornerstone of our world." Similarly, the patriotism on display at the Vietnamese community's Freedom Day rally this spring—with special emphasis on the debt owed to American veterans—would have been at home in any VFW lodge in the nation. And when the Organization of Chinese-American Women and the Pan-Asian American Chamber of Commerce get together to hand out their Excellence 2000 awards, the subtitles highlight an idea of civil rights that never seems to make it into the *Washington Post*: "Celebrating a Decade of Excellence" (1989); "Proud to Be Americans" (1990); "Success through Quality: One Country, One Constitution, One Destiny" (1991).

"We are not asking for privileges," says Chamber President Susan Au Allen. "We don't ask ourselves what this or that bit of civil-rights legislation will do for us. All we want is the chance to work hard for our families, keep more of what we earn, and not have our children kept out of good schools when their grades and test scores show they should get in."

THE Asian-American antipathy toward government assistance helps explain why the Left has not taken up their cause. But it does not excuse the crushing indifference of the Republican Party. Possibly Republicans have come to take their vote for granted. If so this is a grave mistake, because without a civil-rights language to accommodate their success, Asian-Americans—or at least their elites—will begin to gravitate toward the establishment language that has proved so poisonous. We saw some of this in the *Miss Saigon* debate, when some Asian groups came out in support of the demands by Actors' Equity to reject an English actor's right to play a Eurasian pimp because he was not of Asian descent.

"We have to be a little more aggressive in promoting our philosophy," says Elaine Chao, deputy secretary of transportation. "Where the Democrats push themselves all the time, we Republicans tend to have a 'survival of the fittest' attitude."

That needs to end, not so much for the good of the Republican Party as for the health of the Republic. Today we are at a crossroads in determining the most fundamental of all civic issues: how we are to order our society. It's bad enough that for the past two decades this debate has been dominated by the world view of an increasingly narrow band of black and liberal interest groups. Worse still is that the culture has accepted without a murmur the assumption not only that all blacks share these ideas of quotas and suchlike but that every other minority must do so as well.

The good news is that there exists another idea of the American proposition, every bit as open and diverse but more in tune with the constitutional principles that held us together in the past. At a gathering of the Asian-American Voters Coalition last year, Nancy Kwan put it this way: "We will honor your government and your history and your ways," she said. "We will be a part of your schools and your universities and your work places. We treasure what you are, for we know—perhaps even more than you do sometimes—what the word freedom really means. We know what it is not to be free." Now that's a language we can all speak. ☐

The Last Communist

RADEK SIKORSKI

WARSAW

DOES anybody still remember Mieczyslaw Rakowski? As recently as two years ago Rakowski seemed the last hope of Polish socialism. First secretary of the Polish Communist Party, prime minister of Communist Poland, darling of the progressive Western press, he was supposed to be the one man capable of reconciling Moscow's aims with benign policies at home. With his suede shoes, fashionable suits, and French haircuts, Rakowski was the answer to the ardent prayers of Western intellectuals: a liberal, sophisticated, flexible Communist.

But no Oriana Fallaci camps in Rakowski's anteroom these days. The government telephone—a symbol of political masculinity in Communist Poland—has been removed from his apartment. He kills time editing a

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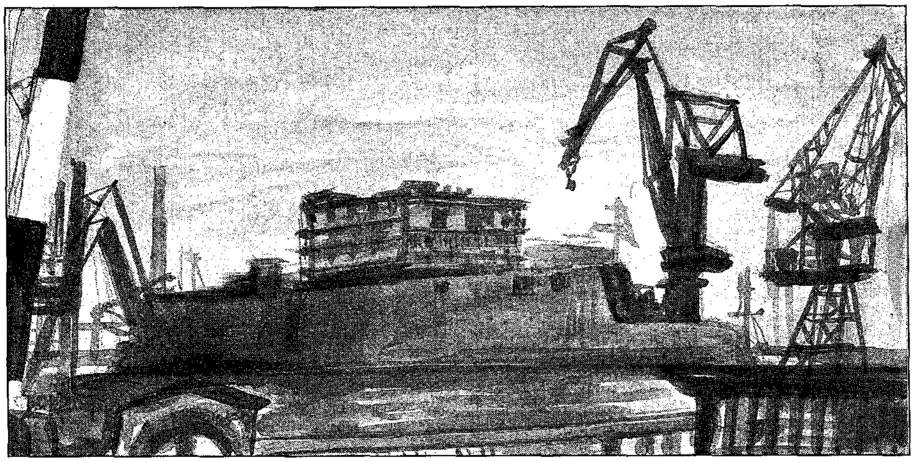
Mr. Sikorski, NR's roving correspondent, is now based in Warsaw.



Joseph Borzotta

marginal neo-Communist weekly in a dingy office in an unfashionable part of Warsaw. Instead of becoming Communism's own enlightened despot, Rakowski is just another has-been. *How Did It Happen?* is the title of his recently published memoirs.

The book might have gone unnoticed had it not received praise from an unexpected source—none other than Adam Michnik, the veteran dissident. Michnik, who was as familiar with Communist jails as Rakowski was with the Central Committee building, lauds his erstwhile enemy as "an outstanding reformer of socialism," and says the book is important and honest.

Michnik's endorsement has opened up again the most important intellectual debate in recent Polish history: Did Communism collapse thanks entirely to the efforts of Polish society, or should some of the credit go to Polish Communists? If the latter, Polish Communists can be regarded as having been covert patriots all along and can take their rightful place in society. If the former, then Communists were traitors and Poland has to be de-Communized the same way Germany was de-Nazified after World War II.

In Poland, old Communists generally choose between two ways of justifying their past. The General Jaruzelski school of Machiavellian *Realpolitik* argues as follows: "Of course we never saw socialism as anything but a silly Soviet obsession. It's just that someone had to rule the country on Russia's behalf so long as Yalta was in force. We ruined the economy, it's true (who wouldn't have, with such an absurd system?), but at least we saved Poland from becoming a Soviet Republic. The moment we felt Moscow's reins loosening, we gave up power without bloodshed. When we look at the fate of Ukraine or Lithuania, we take satisfaction in a job reasonably well done." This line of defense has raised General Jaruzelski's own popularity considerably.

In *How Did It Happen?* Rakowski, the thinking man's Communist, keeps the courage of his convictions. Although he did not know Marxism when he joined the Communist Party in 1946, he was captivated by a vision of a new, superior social order, "a system in which people living off the labor of their hands would not have to bow and scrape before landowners and capitalists." For Rakowski, the history of Communist Poland is a Hegelian struggle of ideas. Treading as he does so high above the concerns of ordinary mortals, he finds no space to mention the Soviet Union's brotherly assistance in introducing socialism, terror, and deportations.

With touching sincerity, he confesses that only when he got nearer the levers of power did he realize that People's Poland was not an independent country. The Russians "behave like masters" and the Soviet ambassador like "a classic [colonial] governor." He overhears Jaruzelski saying he is afraid that he will be taken to Moscow in a sack. Suslov, the vestal virgin of Russian Communist orthodoxy, harangues his Polish comrades at Politburo meetings. Russians say amongst themselves: "Pity that such a lovely country will have to be smashed to pieces." Strangely, none of it makes Rakowski cast his mind back to the origins of socialism in Poland.

Only by the very end, when Poland was literally on the verge of bankruptcy, did he realize that socialism, in practice, means colossal waste and the rule of an ossified oligarchy. He portrays this banal truth as a "drama of historical dimensions," as if he couldn't have learnt it from any Polish schoolboy.

None of this will do. If Rakowski is described as honest, what would it take to deserve the appellation of a political chameleon? Communists may now posture as honest men who gave up power when circumstances permitted, but let us not forget that they never intended to do so. When Rakowski and Jaruzelski sat at the roundtable with Solidarity in the spring of 1989 they never imagined that this would lead to the loss of power. Indeed, Poland is still saddled with the Communist-dominated parliament elected in June 1989, which was to guarantee Communist control of the country for years to come.

Rakowski himself gives a hint of what really happened. The Russians had decided that they would no longer prop up client regimes in Eastern Europe, "but they never bothered to tell us about it." When all the lies, half-truths, and muddles are discounted, the truth can in fact be gleaned from this book: Moscow's faithful stooges were dropped by their ungrateful masters.

In the end one feels sorry for Rakowski. He still hasn't grasped much. He was a Communist but "always favored a market economy." He favors the market but compares Poland's painful attempt to reintroduce it with the restoration of the Bourbons. He favors the market but, in a notorious recent interview given to a Moscow daily, warns Russia against going "Poland's way." When they were in power, men like Rakowski inspired fear. They could cast you in jail, have you disappeared, or call in a foreign army to restore order. They may have been evil, one thought, but they were devilishly clever. Now that the aura of power is gone, they turn out to be confused old fools.

"Have I wasted my life?" Rakowski asks himself, and his own answer is of course reassuring. But Rakowski's rise to the top leadership of the Communist Party puts one in mind of an anecdote about a man's long courtship of a beautiful girl. After many trials and humiliations he got the girl, but when he finally consummated his passion she was pushing seventy and hardly the beauty he had fallen in love with so long ago. ☐

Cuomo Agonistes

HERBERT LONDON

Chris Miles

NEW YORK

MARIO CUOMO began his third term as governor of New York this January with an austere inaugural, forswearing the 19-gun salute and symphony overtures of four years ago. In the following months, he led the rhetorical charge for budget cuts in the face of a $6-billion deficit. He is now planning a national speaking tour to bash the Bush Administration for "a growing underclass, a deteriorating infrastructure, and a softening of our economic strength," he told the *Los Angeles Times*. "We have a federal deficit so large people can't even remember its size and we have never been weaker economically."

The pot is not only calling the kettle black, it is claiming to be lily-white to boot. Cuomo bears primary responsibility for that $6-billion deficit, and for the accompanying destruction of the New York economy. And while posing as a born-again fiscal conservative, he is proposing somewhere between $1 and $1.5 billion in new taxes and fees for the next fiscal year.

First, a bit of history. In his first two terms Mr. Cuomo added 31,000 new employees to the state workforce, now numbering about 280,000. Spending rose at two and a half times the rate of inflation, while tax revenues increased by "only" 89 per cent, and New York had the 47th slowest rate of job creation in the U.S. in that period. Cuomo is fond of referring to his two tax cuts (actually forced on him by the legislature), but never mentions the $1.37 in tax increases for every dollar of tax cuts, leaving combined state and local taxes the second highest in the nation at 16.4 per cent.

Cuomo insists that he is not responsible for local taxes. But local spending in New York is largely driven by state mandates, such the freest-spending Medicaid program in the nation. And last year, for example, the governor reduced the state contribution to the Teachers' Pension Fund, forcing municipal governments to increase property taxes by $400 million to cover the shortfall.

New York has 7.1 per cent of the nation's population and 15 per cent of the debt. The debt doubled under Cuomo, but that didn't stop him from blaming Washington for New York's troubles nearly forty times in his hour-long State of the State address.

The money stopped coming in three years ago when the boom ended, but the governor kept spending. To meet three consecutive "revenue shortfalls," the governor relied on tax increases, deficit notes, new fees, one-shot borrowing, refinancing, fund raids, and a variety of sleight-of-hand accounting measures. Credit agencies took note, and the state's bond rating plummeted to third worst in the nation, ahead of only Louisiana and Massachusetts. Cuomo's response was to make a virtue (his own virtue) of necessity. In this year's budget address, he proclaimed: "I will reject any proposed tax increases . . . any cash manipulations . . . the idea of deficit notes." He did not explain why he embraced these gimmicks for years, nor, in saying that it was "time for the raw truth," did he explain why the truth had to wait two terms before its arrival.

It should thus come as no surprise that what Mario Cuomo calls "deep and painful" spending cuts are actually spending increases—i.e., cuts in projected increases.

The governor justified the cuts to his liberal followers by noting that "While these cuts are painful they must be viewed in the context of the overall generous investments of this administration in education, social service, and local aid over the last eight years." What he has not been able to show is how this reckless spending improved education, social services, or local conditions. Education spending increases of over 100 per cent have been followed by drops in SAT scores (from 1980 to 1990 New York fell from 6th to 14th place among the 22 states that administer the SAT), and the high-school graduation rate declined from 63.4 per cent in 1982 to 62.3 per cent in 1988. The governor plans to cut the most expensive welfare system in America by, in the words of his budget director, "targeting benefits to the most needy." How many states need to *change* their welfare policies to do that?

When he isn't blaming Washington, Cuomo blames the state legislature for his fiscal problems. And yet he has used the line-item veto sparingly, trimming only $81 million in his first two terms. By contrast, his predecessor, Hugh Carey, a self-described liberal Democrat, cut over $1.3 billion through line-item vetoes from 1980 to 1982 alone. During Carey's two terms in the stagflation era, the proportion of New Yorkers' personal income used for state spending dropped from 9.1 to 8.6 per cent. Under Cuomo, it has risen to 9.4 per cent.

As he shadowboxes with the press corps in coming months, Cuomo can be expected to brag, as he did at the National Press Club last December, about his ability to make "tough decisions." If he had been willing to make those tough decisions these last eight years, New York would not be in its present financial predicament and Cuomo would not be simply a more glib Michael Dukakis, separated from Massachusetts by the Hudson River and a pair of heavy eyebrows. ☐

Mr. London, Dean of the Gallatin Division of New York University and the New York Conservative Party nominee for governor in 1990, is a co-founder of CHANGE-NY.

The Politics of Quotas

AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT

The Democrats brazenly continue to press their no-quota quota bill, and the Republicans seem powerless to stop them. What they need is a completely new tactic: the politics of playfulness.

HADLEY ARKES

WHEN President Bush vetoed the Kennedy–Hawkins bill—called, by some, the Civil Rights Act of 1990—he had, in his possession, surveys that measured the savviness of the public about racial quotas. The issue of "racial entitlements" has now moved beyond the sensibilities of academics and lawyers; an awareness of this question has been diffused through the public, and it excites a moral concern that runs surprisingly deep. Deep enough, in any event, that the charge of "racial quotas" now has bite, and the recognition has settled recently among Democratic advisors that this issue may now be quite a powerful asset for the Republicans in 1992. Apparently, experience has now confirmed, for people rooted in the world, that the language of "affirmative action" is pretentious, false, cynical; that behind the ingenious rationalizations, and the high-minded claims of fairness, is an engine that distributes benefits badly, and grossly, on the basis of race.

But what is more remarkable about the reactions of the public is that people without the burden of a college education have no trouble in seeing the wrong, in principle, in a system of racial entitlements. A piece last January in the *Washington Post* quoted Ron Shogren, a white policeman in Chicago, who reported that he had scored "563rd" on an exam for promotion to sergeant: "I was 17 out from being made when they tore the list down. But they had gone down to number 2,000 to promote someone who was a minority. Do I think it's fair? Certainly not." Michael Caccitolo, a former policeman in Chicago, who is now a Republican committeeman in the 23rd Ward, remarked that policies on affirmative action "strike at the fundamental constitutional issue that everyone is granted equal protection under the law. How do you have it both ways?"

Getting It Straight

WHY IS the issue grasped more readily by these men than by the people who speak so innocently of the "benign" use of racial assignments? To assign a job to one person on the basis of race is to turn away from other applicants on the basis of race. That may not be a problem if the wrong of racial discrimination is understood simply, and solely, as a matter of withholding benefits from black people. But this state of affairs would indeed be a problem if there is something *in principle* wrong with assigning benefits and disabilities on the basis of race.

The matter may come through with more force if we switch the example for a moment and put the question, Is there something *in principle* wrong with segregating children in schools on the basis of race? Or is the wrongness of segregation merely *contingent* on whether segregation impairs the performance of black children in the schools? What if we could show, in one case or another, that separating students on the basis of race would actually *improve* the performance of black children? Would segregation, in that case, cease to be wrong? But when we speak these days of the wrong of segregation, we suggest that it is wrong in the deep, moral sense—which is to say, that it is wrong in itself, wrong in principle, and that its wrongness will not be effaced even if segregation happened, on occasion, to produce some good results.

To speak in this language is to call forth the distinc-

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tions made by philosophers between the things that are *categorically* or *contingently* right or wrong, good or bad. Or, to put it another way, we may speak of things that are good or bad in themselves, as opposed to things that are good or bad merely as means to other ends. It is widely understood, for example, that the taking of an alcoholic drink would not be harmful under all circumstances. The dangers in drinking would depend critically on matters of quantity, moderation, excess. And yet, in contrast, no one would say that genocide, if taken in moderation, may be harmless or inoffensive.

And that is precisely why that celebrated opinion of Justice Lewis Powell in the *Bakke* case (1978)—that opinion praised for its common sense, for it detachment from rigid doctrines—must be seen as the essence of witlessness. Powell summoned a majority of his colleagues to join him in striking down the arrangements of the medical school at the University of California at Davis, because the school set aside 16 places out of 100, reserved for racial minorities, in every entering class. Powell's complaint was that the access to these places at a public university was governed *solely* by race. As Powell put it, the "state's distribution of benefits or imposition of burdens hinges on ancestry or the color of a person's skin"; and the benign purpose of the program could "not justify a classification that imposes disadvantages upon persons like [Bakke], who bear no responsibility for whatever harm the beneficiaries of the special admissions program are thought to have suffered."

Designated Victim
Baloo

But then, as Powell reached for a remedy, and for his deeper genius, his four colleagues deserted him. He needed to be joined by four different colleagues in order to complete his opinion with this novel rendering of justice: It was not that race could never be taken into account, among the things that made applicants interesting. It was, rather, that race had to be balanced among a variety of attributes that could make candidates appealing to a school. There might be an interest in students from poor families or backward countries; students who were inclined to work in the inner cities, or to minister, in a special mission, to lapsed stockbrokers. Or, someone might be interesting because he happened to be Hispanic or black. But this dance to benign sentiment still could not get around the fact that, if race was to be "taken into account," a decision on admission could still *pivot* on the matter of race. At a certain point, faced with candidates equal in other respects, a dean of admissions was still entitled to conclude, on the basis of race alone, that a black or Hispanic candidate was likely to be more interesting, and therefore more deserving of a place. Whether race was used marginally, then, or exclusively, as a standard of selection, its use in any degree would absorb every false premise that made these discriminations wrong in principle.

A Little Genocide?

THAT POINT remained utterly inaccessible to Justice Powell and the four judges who joined him, mainly because they had managed to purge, from their jurisprudence on race, any understanding of the properties or the logic of a "principle" in the strictest sense. And yet, it is not even faintly imaginable that any of these jurists could have written a sentence of this kind: "that it would be wrong to kill people *solely* on account of their race; but it may be reasonable to take race into account, along with many other factors, when we use lethal force against people." Even judges as dim as Justices Stevens and Marshall would have recognized something jarring, some sign of logic askew, in saying that "genocide may be more defensible if it is used only marginally, in a handful of cases, as one among a rich variety of reasons for killing." That they could not recognize the same vice of reasoning in their decisions on affirmative action must be the measure—can *only* be the measure—of one thing: that they have been quite far from accepting, or even understanding, the notion that discriminations based on race are in fact *wrong in themselves*.

In fact, this judicial misunderstanding was nearly brought to the level of a doctrinal statement by Justice Brennan, in the year following the *Bakke* case, when he wrote for the Court in *United Steelworkers* v. *Weber*. Brennan acknowledged that the Civil Rights Act of 1964 had prescribed equal treatment based on race; but he went on to "explain" that the real meaning or spirit of this law was expressed in a remark made by Senator Hubert Humphrey: that "The crux of the problem [was] to open employment opportunities for Negroes in occupations which have been traditionally closed to them." Never mind that Humphrey had sworn up and down to his colleagues, in his usual, effusive way, that Title VII of the Civil Rights Act would not create any power "to require hiring, firing, or promotion of employees in order to meet a racial 'quota' or to achieve a certain racial balance. . . . In fact, the very opposite is true. Title VII prohibits discrimination. In effect, it says that race, religion, and national origin are not to be used as the basis for hiring and firing." In order to accomplish his "interpretation" of the statute, Brennan had to do nothing less than invert the understanding contained in the legislation. Under Brennan's new construction, the assignment of benefits on the basis of race was not to be regarded as wrong in itself. Rather, its rightness or wrongness would be *contingent* on whether those assignments distributed more jobs to blacks.

Hence, the startling—and nearly perverse—irony in our current political situation: the so-called "civil-rights community," the faction that is credited by the media with the moral high ground on civil rights, has sought to promote its strength by reducing the nature of the wrong in racial discrimination from something wrong in principle to something merely contingently wrong. And on the other side, a state of affairs no less remarkable: the Republican Party has brought forth a leadership and a following that seem to cohere now in a disposition to regard discriminations based on race as practices that are wrong in principle. The result is a conservative Administration that is willing to veto even something called a "civil-rights bill" because it threatened to make racial quotas ever more operational in our lives. Perhaps it is a reflection of my own conservative temper, or a disposition *not* to expect political men to do the right things for the right reasons. But for anyone who comes to politics with this temper, these changes in the cast of the Republican Party deserve to be trumpeted for the momentous things they are.

Missing the Point

BUT THEN the question must be asked: Why must that party insulate its adversaries from the principled implications—and the political costs—of their own position? Why should it not be rubbed in their faces at every turn that their position depends on a rejection of the notion that there is something in principle *wrong* with discrimination based on race? And if the occasions are ever wanting, why should we not create the occasions for the sake of making this point and embarrassing these people? There is hardly a more dramatic example, in this vein, than the controversy that flared last December over Michael Williams and the question of "minority scholarships." I still recall the reporter on the network news, confiding to the viewers the remark attributed to someone on the White House staff: The Administration would be right, according to "the law," in proscribing scholarships based on race, but its position would be "morally" shabby. How is it, so late in the seasons of our reflection, that the moral ground can still be assigned so glibly to the people who would distribute benefits on the basis of race?

"The law" applied by Michael Williams was hardly very strenuous; it was consistent with the doctrine produced by Justice Powell in the *Bakke* case: the Administration was merely saying, again, that race could not be used as the *sole* ground on which to extend or deny scholarships. If the members of the civil-rights community were offended by that policy, then they should have been reminded that they were being offended by the very law that they themselves had helped to create. And if their quarrel was with the law, then they should have been invited to say just which parts of that law they now wished to change.

Some politicians, in a crisis, try to pretend that they are holding to their position while they are really retreating. In a curious bit of reverse posturing, the Administration took the opposite turn: it adopted the most artless formula to cover an apparent reversal of its position; but in reality, it was feigning a retreat, while holding to its position. The stratagem, supposedly devised by John Sununu, was so evidently unworkable and indefensible that it may be described as brilliant: the Administration suggested that colleges may make a distinction between the money that comes from private and from public sources. The programs supported by public funds must be governed by the strictures of the law, which would forbid the awarding of scholarships based on race. But programs supported by private donations may be free from those regulations.

But the distinction between public and private funds runs directly counter to the purpose of the so-called Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1988, which was passed by the liberals over the veto of Mr. Reagan. The design of that act was to make sure that even a private college would come under the full ensemble of federal regulations, in every part of its operations, *including the parts supported by private funds*, if there was only the slightest encounter with money from the Federal Government. The purpose of that act was to counter the decision of the Supreme Court in the celebrated *Grove City* case of 1984. Grove City College in Pennsylvania did not accept any money from the Federal Government; the only "contribution" of the government to the college came in the most indirect way, through loans to the students. Milton Friedman remarked years ago, in regard to an analogous problem, that one could hardly regard the local supermarket as a federal installation, or as a recipient of federal money, if some of the patrons happened to use food stamps issued by the Federal Government. But it was precisely that implausible construction that was adopted as part of the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1988, and now, in a curious twist, it guaranteed the "frustration" of Mr. Sununu's plan to salvage scholarships reserved for certain races. In the face of these maneuvers, the liberals preserved a strange silence, and it may be time to force the breaking of that silence: Would the liberals support Mr. Sununu in his effort to save "minority scholarships"? Would they now permit private donors to establish, in colleges, programs and benefits that were confined to members of one race? And how would they propose to do that without agreeing to undo the centerpiece of the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1988?

Politics as Theater

AND YET, the inclination of most politicians is to avoid raising questions of this kind. Conservatives are not disposed to propose legal measures for the sake mainly of making a point, even a strategic point. But that is one reason why conservatives concede the initiative, recurringly, to their adversaries. Liberals like Senator Wirth of Colorado are always willing to bring forth bills to have, for example, the Federal Government fund abortions in the District of Columbia or in military installations. These proposals do not pass, but every year the Administration and its allies are forced to expend their energies, and political capital, in defeating them.

There is a comparable utility for a conservative Administration in keeping its adversaries busy in the same way. But beyond that, conservatives need to discover the richer possibilities of politics as a theater, as an arena for playfulness with a serious purpose. It is the responsibility of our political class to get clear, for example, on the principled grounds of the laws they would impose on the rest of us. For that reason, it must ever be legitimate for conservatives to keep forcing their adversaries to face the principled implications of their own positions. If we trace any liberal scheme to its underlying principle, it should be possible to see several ways in which that principle would cut against some interest or group that is bound up with the passions or the constituency of liberalism. And is it not, after all, a fair test of any policy that people are willing to honor the principle behind the policy even when it cuts against their interests?

I would offer here, as a case in point, the infamous affair of Bob Jones University, which still offers lessons worth pondering (see box). The political costs were inflicted on a group of fundamentalist Christians allied to a conservative Administration. And no one—on the Court, in the Congress, or in the Administration—seemed to become any clearer about the principled ground of the policy. At the same time, the liberal side was permitted to avoid the principled implications of its positions, and to suffer no political costs.

Don't Cook the Books

SINCE I first set down these lines in draft, the redoubtable Henry Hyde has offered a notable example of the kind of strategy I am proposing. With the action thickening this spring on the so-called Civil Rights Bill, Hyde has created a serious strain among the Democrats by bringing in an amendment to bar the practice of "race-norming." In that celebrated practice, the scores on tests are arranged separately by racial or ethnic group, so that blacks, say, or Hispanics, may be compared (more favorably) among themselves. Let us assume that there is a test designed to gauge certain skills of literacy and motor control that are relevant to a job in a warehouse. If a black and a white achieve the same numerical score on the exam, the black applicant may rank in the top 20 per cent of blacks who have taken the exam, and the white may rank only in the top 40 per cent of white applicants. That would allow the claim to be made that the black candidate had achieved a "higher" score—once the results have been relativized and bathed in fiction by this scheme of interpretation. This arrangement undercuts

PRINCIPLED PLAYFULNESS: CASE STUDY I

BACK IN 1983, the Reagan Administration suffered a political embarrassment over the tax-exempt status of Bob Jones University, a fundamentalist school in North Carolina. In an earlier day, Bob Jones University had refused admission to blacks on the grounds of its own Biblical doctrine. That doctrine came to be modified as the federal laws against discrimination began to bear on private schools. The university began to admit black students, but under these restrictions: that there be no dating or marriage across racial lines.

With no one denied admission on the basis of race, the situation had to be seen in this cast: Bob Jones University was a private, voluntary association, composed of people of all races; and among the things shared by the members of the association was a preference for confining their dating and marriage within racial lines. One might take as an analogy a computer dating service that dealt with clients of all races, but matched them only with partners of the same race or nationality.

The Reagan Administration initially supported the university in its defense against the challenge to its tax-exempt status. But a storm of criticism arose, and it soon became plain that the Court would strain its reasoning, grin, wink, and find some way to come down on the "right" side. Sensing the drift of affairs, the Administration gave way, and changed sides. For this shift, the Administration received no thanks, gained no political credit, and probably suffered no cost. As for the Supreme Court, the Chief Justice produced an opinion so inapt that it was a virtual concession by Mr. Burger that he was merely making it through the day. His precedents were utterly off the point, and his "explanations" did not explain.

Neither the majority nor the minority in that case worked on the premise that there was something in *principle wrong with discriminations* based on race. If it were wrong to draw adverse inferences about people on the basis of race, then presumably it would be quite as wrong to turn away from another person on the basis of race, in allotting one's respect or affection, in choosing a partner for sex and marriage, as well as choosing a partner in a business. And any organization that incorporated a denial of this principle would be as illegitimate, say, as an organization that incorporated theft as part of its character. But no one on the Court, either in the majority or in the minority, was willing to go that far. Chief Justice Burger merely argued, for the majority, that the practice of Bob Jones University was inconsistent with a pattern of public policy established by the Federal Government in a train of statutes and executive orders.

But what "public policy"? The Chief Justice persistently cited the commitment to forbid "racial disthe very logic of having a test in the first place. As Congressman Hyde remarked, “If they want to abandon testing, that’s one thing. But if you are going to use the test, don’t cook the books.”

Hyde’s amendment has ignited a certain distemper among the Democrats, precisely because there is nothing plausible they can say to resist it. Hence, Representative Craig Washington of Texas has complained of Hyde: “I don’t think he has a bit of interest in the issue of testing. I think he is interested in torpedoing the Civil Rights Bill.” But the amendment would have the effect of “torpedoing” the Civil Rights Bill only because the practice of “race-norming” draws out, explicitly and faithfully, the logic contained in all measures of affirmative action. What is the difference, after all, between “race-norming” and the scheme that is followed at the “best” colleges and law schools, of arranging minority applicants in different pools, and admitting them with standards far less demanding than the standards applied to whites?

The Democrats are being pressed, then, to counter Hyde by appearing to join him. In the same style, they are seeking to cope with the charge that the Civil Rights Bill as a whole is a “quota bill.” Even in the last Congress, there was an attempt to dissolve the charge of “quotas” by providing in the text that nothing in the bill “shall be construed to require or encourage” the use of “quotas on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.” But now, with their minds concentrated, some Democrats are anxious to go even further. Indeed, in an attempt to gain backing among conservative Democrats, the managers of the bill have added language that pretends to foreclose the hiring of the “unqualified.” But the move is altogether disingenuous. No quota system worked in the past by hiring plumbers to fill the places of doctors. The quotas worked, rather, by shading tests of competence or merit, to encourage the appointment of people *somewhat* less qualified, who were drawn from the right social circles, or from the racial group favored at the time. The Democrats have staged their opposition to quotas by opposing a scheme that no one has ever seen. And with that move, they would make life secure for every other scheme that would assign benefits and preferences on the basis of race.

This maneuver has been brought forth by those political men of the most exquisite sensibility, who were quick to find, in the famous ads on Willie Horton, a cynical appeal to racism. But the deep cynicism of their own proposal does not touch them with the least embarrassment. The managers of the current bill surely know that any pious assurances on their part about quotas can be treated in the same way as Senator Humphrey’s on the 1964 Civil Rights Act were treated, even if those assurances were placed explicitly in the statute.

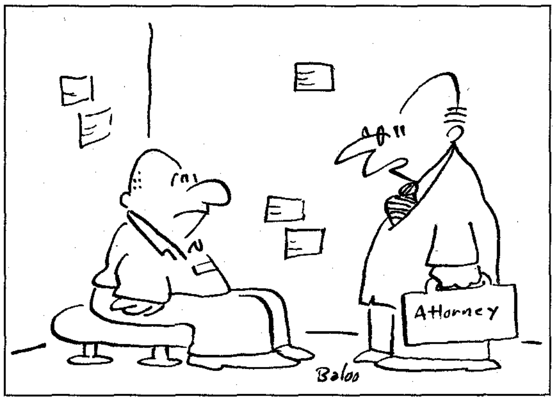
For the fact of the matter is that the Civil Rights Bill has never been a quota bill on account of anything mandated in the text of the bill. The text contains no ex-

crimination in education.” But the enduring point of embarrassment was that no one, in this case, was denied access to a school on the basis of race. And there was nothing, in the inventory of statutes and executive orders, that ever addressed the question of dating and marriage. There was not the slightest reason to suppose that the people who enacted these measures had meant to condemn racial discrimination in such intimate and private matters as the selection of a spouse.

Beyond that, there was powerful evidence, all around, that the wrong of racial discrimination was not understood in such a sweeping way, even by liberals of the largest nature. For it was in the journals of the most advanced liberal opinion—journals like *The New York Review of Books*—that one found a thickness of ads in the “personals” columns reading in this way: “SWM seeks SWF.” Translation: “Single *white* male seeks single *white* female.” *The New York Review* would never have run an advertisement for housing with an expression of preference for buyers or tenants of a certain race; and it would not have done that even before advertising of that kind had been forbidden by federal law. Evidently, to the editors and the readers of *The New York Review*, a discrimination on the basis of race in the choice of a partner for sex and marriage was not exactly like a discrimination based on race in the rental of housing or the hiring of an employee. But if that understanding was legitimate for *The New York Review*, why should the same tolerance not have been extended to Bob Jones University? If Bob Jones University lost its exemption from taxes, why should *The New York Review* not have lost its second-class mailing privileges?

Imagine now, for a moment, that a conservative Administration had sought to respond to the problem of the Bob Jones case in a rather different, political way. Let us suppose that the Administration had sought to draw out the principled implications of the case, and that it posed the question explicitly: Were the liberals really willing to agree that the principle that forbids discriminations on the basis of race would reach, in its sweep, to the choice of partners in dating and sex? If so, would it not be fitting, in establishing that principle, to show that it was understood and honored on all sides? One way to do that is to cast the policy in a form that would cut against some liberal groups as well as conservatives—for example, *The New York Review* and its advertisers.

If the challenge had been posed in that way, I suspect the result would have been a standoff, with no legislation passed. But the point would have been made. And the very fact that Congress had been faced with this question—and held back—would be of interest to judges when a case like *Bob Jones University* v. *IRS* came before a court. —HA plicit instruction, to any employer, to make use of quotas. The purpose of the bill is to put a powerful, expensive burden on an employer to prove the "relevance," or the "business necessity," of any test for a given job, if that test has the effect of creating "disparate results" among the races (i.e., if it turns out to pass more whites than racial minorities). And anyone who wished to be obstinate could insist on an empirical confirmation for even the clearest test. Let us suppose we are testing nurses for their comprehension of the rudiments of surgical procedure, and we require that the candidates get 60 per cent of the questions correct in order to pass. It may always be an open question whether candidates with a score less than 60 will actually perform worse on the job than candidates with a score above 60. And so it may always be appropriate to call a test into question unless the designers have actually carried out an experiment: have they actually tested a cohort of nurses with scores above 60, and compared their performance with a cohort of nurses with scores lower than 60? Prudence prevents tests of that kind from being carried out on patients or other clients. But if they are not carried out, the test may be open to enduring challenge under the law—unless the employer allays those charges with a "benign" record in the hiring of racial minorities. Which is to say, that employers will be encouraged to make decisions on hiring pivot—turn decisively—on the attribute of race. Whether a little genocide, or a little racism, at the margins is a serious thing depends, again, on whether we think there is something wrong in itself with making inferences about the worth, or the deserts, of people on the basis of their race.



"If you'd broken a law, I could get you off—but you violated a federal guideline!"

The Teaching Function

POLITICIANS as a class are not an especially sober bunch. And yet it has been astonishingly hard, even for the most urbane of politicians, to understand the utility of a political style that poses questions in a seemingly playful way or seeks, in an offhand style, to teach. We owe to Congressman Hyde the proof of the proposition that these possibilities have not yet become extinct among the political class. He has shown us, again, that wit can be joined to a high seriousness in the discipline of legislating.

Another person who did seem to have a sense of these things was Ronald Reagan. Part of the fascination that politics held for him, I think, was that it provided the most serious outlet for a mind that was drawn to the play of certain puzzles about right and wrong. In an innocent way, Mr. Reagan could let slip a remark—for example, that fetuses feel pain. And with that remark, he set off a wave of arguments in the country, rippling out to the universities and the talk shows, until the question was finally taken up in congressional hearings. Gestures of these kinds do not always produce an effect in legislation, but they may nevertheless prepare the public with the reasoning that marks off a new path. Two years after the departure of Mr. Reagan, we may still come to appreciate that playfulness may be a profoundly serious art. ☐

PRINCIPLED PLAYFULNESS: CASE STUDY II

AT A Federalist Society meeting last year at Stanford law school, Judge Stephen Reinhardt made the familiar liberal case for affirmative action. The problem, as the judge explained, is that so many of the critical places in this society, in business and government, are held by white males. Angelo Codevilla, from the Hoover Institution, rose in the audience and pointed out that Judge Reinhardt himself occupied a position of notable authority in this country, and he was, conspicuously, a white male. Why, then, did he not resign his position for the purpose of advancing the policy he was now commending? The judge, of course, declined the invitation, by declining to answer. I had expected my friend Angelo to follow up with this question: "If the Administration came to you and promised to replace you with a black or a woman, what possible ground of justification would you have for continuing?" And after all, it should not be necessary for the judge to know anything about the qualifications, or even the political leanings, of the appointees we would put in his place. For we are not supposed to consider now whether the applicants are more or less qualified, or more or less liberal. The decisive points worth knowing are race, ethnicity, and gender.

It might be provocative, but why would it be illegitimate for the Department of Justice to conduct a survey among the federal judges and pose this question: Would the white males among them be willing to resign if the Department would supply, for their places, the names of appointees who were black and female? Simply putting the question might have some effect on the business of litigation. If a case on affirmative action is argued, there are artful ways of reminding a judge that he had the project of affirmative action placed before him, and that he had declined to take part in the scheme. Would he now be so clear, in ordering up for others, a regimen of justice that he had so notably refused to apply to himself?
—HA

NATIONAL
REVIEW

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT

THE POPE, LIBERTY, AND CAPITALISM

ESSAYS ON CENTESIMUS ANNUS

Peter L. Berger, Milton Friedman, John Gray,
Richard D. Land, Shirley Robin Letwin, Kenneth Minogue,
Richard John Neuhaus, Jacob Neusner,
Gerhart Niemeyer, Michael Novak, Robert A. Sirico,
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Illustrations by Kim Gromoll

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THE POPE, LIBERTY, AND CAPITALISM

When Pope Leo XIII wrote Rerum Novarum *a hundred years ago, liberalism was the dominant political and economic doctrine in Continental Europe. Socialism, its great historical antagonist, had just entered the arena it was to dominate for much of the next century. Pope Leo leveled harsh criticisms against both great creeds of secular materialism.*

Today, it is his criticisms of socialism that seem the more telling. By offering to provide for all the needs of man, socialism was drawn into imposing a materialist despotism which ultimately rendered him both poor and powerless. The melancholy prospect of Eastern Europe, revealed by the great revolutions of 1989, confirmed this papal analysis in almost every particular.

But Leo's critique of liberalism now seems less happy. For capitalism was not a system on the lines of socialism. Indeed, it was not a system at all. It was what you got when the government did nothing to prevent it. As its justifying ideology, liberalism accordingly mutated to reflect new social and economic realities. Indeed, under the pressure of such realities, liberalism split in two—first in the English-speaking world, much later in Continental Europe.

Economic liberalism, politically homeless after being thrown out by liberal parties, was accommodated by a conservatism that was traditional in its moral values and prudent in its politics. Social liberalism, on the other hand, adopted collectivist economics and a radical style in politics as its new and rowdy progeny. The political battles of the non-totalitarian West have been fought between these two patchwork alliances ever since.

But the Vatican continued to treat liberalism as an undifferentiated whole—and one, moreover, that was hostile to religion and virtue. What is startling and important about Centesimus Annus, *Pope John Paul II's new encyclical issued to mark the centenary of* Rerum Novarum, *is that it is the first Vatican document to address realistically and subtly the state of affairs in which liberalism is both triumphant over socialism and at war with itself. That is why it is of interest far beyond the ranks of the Catholic faithful—and why* NATIONAL REVIEW *invited this distinguished symposium of Catholics and non-Catholics, liberals and non-liberals, to explore its meaning and significance.*

—JOHN O'SULLIVAN

Peter L. Berger

GIVEN previous pronouncements on economic matters emanating from Rome and given what Vatican watchers had predicted on this one, I expected that I would have to employ all my diplomatic skills in commenting honestly and in a way that would leave me on speaking terms with my Catholic friends. Happily it turns out that such diplomacy is not required.

Those who believe in the magisterium of the Roman Church will obviously read any document issued by the Pope in a distinctive way. Those of us who do not share this faith—once we have overcome some irritation at being addressed in a style that reminds one forcefully where the verb "to pontificate" comes from—can read such a document in two ways: as a source of intellectual or moral insight; or as a politically significant text. In my view, reading the encyclical in the first mode will yield moderate results. Reading it as a politically significant text leads to the conclusion that what has happened here is a very important breakthrough in Catholic teaching about the modern world.

Inevitably, I suppose, the Pope emphasizes the continuity and the sagacity of Catholic social teaching in the century since *Rerum Novarum*, both matters on which an outside observer may have some reservations. I suppose that it is also inevitable that the Pope oversells

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the value of this teaching: it is offered to the world as "an *indispensable and ideal orientation*" (p. 83; italics in the original). On this, I must respectfully demur. If one forgets the authorship of the document, its analysis of the contemporary situation and its moral judgments certainly strike one as well informed, eminently reasonable, and sensitive to the moral ambiguities of modern institutions. The arguments made are lucid and the conclusions are careful. Here and there one can find passages of considerable force; my favorite one is the statement that "Different cultures are basically different ways of facing the question of the meaning of personal existence" (p. 46). All the same, there is little here that sheds new light on the economic, political, and social processes of our time, and the moral observations are not new.

As a politically relevant statement by the head of the largest single religious organization in the world, this is an enormously important event. There are interesting elements in other parts of the encyclical (such as the cautious criticisms of the welfare state in Chapter VI), but the most striking section is Chapter V, which mostly deals with questions about the economy. For the first time in the modern history of Catholic social doctrine, there is here an emphatic and elaborated approval of the market economy as the optimal economic arrangement in today's world. I don't know if the events of 1989 in the Pope's native Poland have led to this fortunate turn, or whether Michael Novak and his little band of pro-capitalist Catholic intellectuals have finally managed to get through the ideological nonsense promulgated by outfits like Iustitia et Pax, but this encyclical constitutes a very big rebuff to the Catholic Left. Of course, there are already spins on the document suggesting that the Pope is equally critical of socialist and capitalist economies, and even that this encyclical supports that favorite mirage of the Catholic Left, a "third way" between socialism and capitalism (an idea that this Pope had in fact already rejected in a previous encyclical). These interpretations cannot survive a reading of the text.

The Pope dislikes the word "capitalism"; he prefers circumlocutions such as "a society of free work, of enterprise, and of participation." But then he understands by "capitalism" an economy in which there is an "absolute predominance of capital," without any social or political constraints. He makes it very clear that this does not describe Western economies today, as he also makes very clear that his criticisms of the West concern various social and cultural trends within it (such as "consumerism" and disregard of the environment), but *not* its market economy (pp. 75–77). When one adds up the various safeguards the Pope recommends against the unbridled operation of market forces, one arrives at a concept very similar indeed to what was first called a "social market economy" in West Germany—a concept, moreover, that has been widely realized, with whatever attendant failures, in Western democracies.

The encyclical describes the modern "business economy" (another circumlocution) as "human freedom exercised in the economic field." It states that wealth today lies in "knowhow, technology, and skill" rather than in natural resources. It endorses initiative and entrepreneurship, rejects protective "self-reliance" as a strategy for the Third World, says that no "exploitation" in the Marxist sense exists in Western societies today, and says that profit is okay as an economic goal. Most important, the encyclical unambiguously recognizes the "free market" (its phrase) as the most efficient economic system for producing wealth. It also insists that there continue to be terrible economic problems in the poorer countries, but it understands that these problems are not caused by the famous *dependencia* but, on the contrary, by these countries' inadequate integration into the wealth-producing world economy. The encyclical also criticizes the persisting "alienations," in a cultural and spiritual sense, in the rich countries—as do, of course, many of the most enthusiastic proponents of capitalism.

I doubt if this encyclical will induce Milton Friedman to seek Catholic baptism. But it should give Catholics with sane views about economics a much-needed morale booster when they have to deal with the *gauchisme* that is still entrenched both in Catholic academia and in the Catholic bureaucracy in this country. ☐

Milton Friedman

THIS encyclical letter deserves our attention because it comes from the head of a major institution in the modern world, a pre-eminently multinational institution with members in the hundreds of millions throughout the world, an institution that has great influence on the beliefs and day-to-day activities of these hundreds of millions. It deserves attention not because of its philosophical depth or lack thereof, not because of its wisdom or lack thereof, not because of its teachings, however admirable or the reverse, but because it offers evidence on how the present leadership of that institution is likely to exert its influence in coming years.

From that point of view, the message of this document is clear. Totalitarianism, Communism, "real so-

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cialism" are utterly rejected as political and economic models. So also is the attempt to find common ground between Marxism and Christianity—epitomized by "liberation theology," though these words do not, I believe, appear in the 113 pages of the encyclical.

While rejecting these models, "the Church has no models to present" (p. 83). "The Church respects *the legitimate autonomy of the democratic order* and is not entitled to express preferences for this or that institutional or constitutional solution" (p. 92; italics in this and later quotations in the original)—which, of course, does not keep it from expressing preferences. Like any good political document, and the encyclical is of course a political document, it hedges its bets and has something for almost everyone—except Marxists, Communists, and supporters of abortion.

The many ringing phrases endorsing private property (p. 58), free markets (p. 68), even profit (p. 68) will warm the cockles of the classical liberal's heart. The sharp attack on the welfare state (p. 94) and the strong defense of the family (p. 75) will appeal to traditional conservatives. The assertion that "profitability is not the only indicator of a firm's condition" (p. 68) will appeal to the neo-conservatives and other believers in "corporate social responsibility."

The Pope refers to 'workers and other people of good will,' implying that all *workers are 'people of good will'!*

But there is also much for left-liberals. The many warm words for trade unions are accompanied by none of the qualifications attached to most other affirmations. The Pope refers to "workers and other people of good will" (p. 51), implying that *all* workers are "people of good will"! Apparently not even the Polish Pope is immune to the influence of Marx. Attacks on "the affluent society or the consumer society" (p. 40) and more generally on "consumerism" will appeal to John Kenneth Galbraith and his devotees. The Pope strongly endorses a statement in *Rerum Novarum*, the hundredth anniversary of which is the occasion for the issuance of this encyclical, that "man should not consider his material possessions as his own, but as common to all" (p. 59). The Pope asserts that "there are many human needs which find no place on the market" (p. 67). He assigns to the state an expansive role in "*defending . . . collective goods*" (p. 78), assuring a just wage, controlling the market, and performing numerous other functions. So left-liberals and other egalitarians have no reason to feel abandoned by the Pope.

And I have only touched on a few of the issues covered in this remarkably thoughtful, comprehensive, and finely balanced document, which is pervaded with high-minded good intentions on every issue ranging from ecology (p. 73) to human rights (pp. 43, 46, 51) to religious freedom (p. 19) to world government (p. 101).

In keeping with its character as a political document, there is little recognition that various good things may conflict, that good intentions are not enough. There is no discussion of the really hard problems of reconciling conflicts between equally well-intentioned objectives. The noble spirit, the good will, that pervade the document offer the perplexed little help in choosing among alternative means for achieving their objectives, with two notable and important exceptions: first, the utter rejection of "real socialism" (p. 28); second, the strong endorsement of the longstanding "principle of subsidiarity": that "a community of a higher order should not interfere in the internal life of a community of a lower order, depriving the latter of its functions, but rather should support it in case of need and help to coordinate its activity with the activities of the rest of society, always with a view to the common good" (p. 94).

As a non-Catholic classical liberal, I find much to praise and to agree with in this letter addressed to the members of the Catholic faith. My stress on its political character, on the dominance of good will and high motives over substantive content, is not a criticism. For the Church is a political as well as a religious institution and this is a political document. But I must confess that one high-minded sentiment, passed off as if it were a self-evident proposition, sent shivers down my back: "*obedience to the truth* about God and man is the first condition of freedom" (p. 81). Whose "truth"? Decided by whom? Echoes of the Spanish Inquisition? □

John Gray

THE MOST immediately noteworthy feature of *Centesimus Annus* is its continuity with earlier encyclicals of the present Pope and with the doctrines enunciated by Pope Leo XIII in *Rerum Novarum* a hundred years ago. In company with these earlier encyclicals, *Centesimus Annus* belongs to that distinguished tradition of Catholic social theology which, while perceiving in socialism an offspring of the atheist Enlightenment, nevertheless refuses to endorse the institutions of the capitalist market economy as the only viable alternative to socialist central planning.

It is entirely in accord with this tradition that in *Centesimus Annus* the institution of private property should be affirmed while at the same time unregulated freedom of contract is condemned and employers are required to pay their workers "a just wage"; that, whereas the encyclical denounces those believers, such as the liberation theologians, who sought "an impossible compromise between Marxism and Christianity," it manages on the next page to affirm "the positive value of an authentic theology of integral human liberation"; and

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that, while the validity and worth of the profit motive and of entrepreneurial insight is strongly asserted, the encyclical still insists that "it is unacceptable to say that the defeat of so-called 'Real Socialism' leaves capitalism as the only model of economic organization."

These pairs of assertions are not, as a hostile critic of Catholic social theology might claim, merely equivocations, with the encyclical swinging uncertainly between traditional and fashionable wisdom on the moral shortcomings of capitalism. They embody an attempt to stake out genuinely new ground on which the competition between market systems and planned economies has been transcended. It is the prospect of a "third way" on these lines that has animated Catholic social thought for at least a century and which is given powerful expression in *Centesimus Annus*.

The encyclical's refusal to confer an unqualified endorsement on Western capitalism is in many respects welcome and instructive. It reminds us of the Church's perennial teaching that all human institutions are imperfectible, including those of democratic capitalism, since all partake of the original sin to which our species is heir. It thereby protects us from the triumphalist illusion that the collapse of Communism ushers in the end of history. Finally, the encyclical supplies a valuable corrective to the prejudice, common in neo-conservative circles, that there is a unique coincidence between the conditions of a flourishing Christian life and the institutions of democratic capitalism. If the encyclical does no more than remind its modernist readers that the Christian life has been lived, and lived well, in a variety of regimes, including that of European feudalism, it will have done a considerable service.

It remains to be said, nevertheless, that the substantive positions adopted in the encyclical are contestable at every point, exhibiting a dependency on conventional wisdom that borders on the abject. Thus, the encyclical repeats the old canard, peddled by Engels and Hobsbawm and exploded by R. M. Hartwell, that popular living standards declined precipitously during the period of early industrialization. It perpetuates the corrupt ideology of the "Third World"—that geopolitical constellation constituted (as Lord Peter Bauer has pointed out) solely by anti-Western states that are in receipt of Western aid, and which therefore excludes the really successful modernizing states (such as the Five Dragons). And it reiterates time and again the invincible falsehood that modern poverty—the poverty of the Western underclass and of most of the developing countries—is a side-effect, if not an exploitative precondition, of capitalist affluence. The encyclical, in short, does nothing to correct the domination of Western opinion by primitive and long-falsified *marxisant* notions: indeed, its tendency is rather to fortify them.

The most lasting impression conveyed by the encyclical is of a failure of perception—a failure to grasp the institutional framework of liberty and prosperity in the modern world. It is true that the Christian life has flourished, historically, in a diversity of regimes; but all the evidences suggest that, for us, the civilized life as well as the religious life is possible only in a civil society that shelters a market economy under a rule of law. This vital truth risks being lost in vague talk of a third way between capitalism and socialism. It is amply attested by the history of the Communist regimes. It is there that we have witnessed the most ruthless exploitation of workers, the worst corruption amidst the most pitiable poverty, the most spectacular waste of resources, and the most apocalyptic devastation of the natural environment. It is, perhaps, the most disappointing feature of this notable encyclical that even a very careful reader could come from it without a perception of these elementary truths. □

Richard D. Land

THE publication of *Centesimus Annus* ("The Hundredth Year") by Pope John Paul II on the centenary of Pope Leo XIII's ground-breaking encyclical *Rerum Novarum* ("Of New Things") is an event of great historical and theological significance. In the new encyclical, Pope John Paul II does not present the reader with the "good news/bad news" dichotomy which so often confronts one in the modern world. Instead, *Centesimus Annus* offers up good news, better news, and best news.

The good news is that the Pope clearly acknowledges the productivity and efficiency of the free-market economic system and gives it unprecedented papal commendation as "the most efficient instrument for utilizing resources and effectively responding to needs." The better news is that the Pope's endorsement of the capitalist free-market system is inextricably intertwined with numerous cautions about its present weaknesses and failures. His endorsement is neither an unmitigated nor an unqualified one.

The best news is that in an encyclical devoted to economics, the most important conclusion is that economics has severe intrinsic limitations and at best can only support and buttress a political and cultural system based on moral and spiritual truth.

In his stated attempt "to 'look around' at the 'new things' which surround us," the Pope takes as his point of departure not only *Rerum Novarum*, but also the extraordinary events of the last few years, which culminated in the revolution of 1989.

The breathtakingly rapid collapse of the Soviet Union's Eastern European empire is seen by the Pope as due not merely to the "inefficiency of the economic system," but to the Communist system's social, political, and spiritual failures as well. His understanding and analysis of the crucial role played by the churches in laying the necessary groundwork for that revolutionary upheaval will serve as a needed corrective to many Western analysts who continue to minimize or ignore

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the critical impact made by people of faith on those extraordinary events.

Writing in the wake of the demise of Communism as a viable economic hope for the future, the Pope offers his endorsement of "an economic system which recognizes the fundamental and positive role of business, the market, private property, and the resulting responsibility for the means of production," although he would rather call it a "market economy" or a "free economy" than "capitalism."

John Paul II makes it abundantly clear that he cannot support the "unbridled capitalism" which much too often characterized the West in the past, "a system in which freedom in the economic sector is not circumscribed within a strong juridical framework which places it at the service of human freedom . . . the core of which is ethical and religious."

Informing and driving the entire critique of the world's economic and political systems, Marxist, socialist, capitalist, totalitarian, is the question of human nature. Again and again the Pope returns to the theme of humankind's "unique value" as having been made in God's image, which confers on human beings an "incomparable dignity" which must never be forgotten.

The Pope is not so much criticizing capitalism as 'an economic system' as he is assailing 'an ethical and cultural system.'

Simultaneously, there is an equal emphasis on the flawed nature of humanity in its fallen, sinful state, asserting that "the fundamental error of socialism is anthropological in nature." The Pope reminds the world that "man, who was created for freedom, bears within himself the wound of original sin, which constantly draws him toward evil and puts him in need of redemption." This great and central truth of human experience "has great hermeneutical value insofar as it helps one to understand human reality."

The Christian view of human nature, which tells us that human beings are spiritual creatures with spiritual capacities as well as spiritual needs and flaws, informs our critique not only of socialism, but of capitalism as well. Capitalists are sinful too, and experience tells us that capitalism will produce great injustices if allowed to operate with no checks and balances from the state (government) and workers (trade unions).

If capitalism is more productive economically and less destructive to the human spirit than Communism, that does not mean it should be gloried in as complete and whole in and of itself. The Pope argues persuasively for a balanced system which understands that economics cannot provide ultimate fulfillment for human beings. Capitalism works because it most accurately understands the productive potential of enlightened self-interest in fallen human nature, but it must be balanced with an understanding that people are not just material beings.

The Pope has some strong and critical words for the libertarian elements in Western culture who are tempted to see the collapse of Communism as "a one-sided victory of their own economic system" and who fail to see the weaknesses and blind spots in capitalist economics uninformed by moral and spiritual truths. Such a capitalist system, the Pope concludes,

> seeks to defeat Marxism on the level of pure materialism by showing how a free-market society can achieve a greater satisfaction of material human needs than Communism, while equally excluding spiritual values. In reality . . . this social model insofar as it denies an autonomous existence and value to morality, law, culture, and religion . . . agrees with Marxism, in the sense that it totally reduces man to the sphere of economics and the satisfaction of material needs.

Attacking the "consumerism" produced by such a mindset, the Pope condemns an economic ethic which defines the "good life" merely as "having" more and more material things. He would emphatically agree with President Bush's assertion that "We are not the sum of our possessions. They are not the measure of our lives."

In struggling against the restrictions and dehumanizing aspects of an unrestrained capitalism, the Pope makes it clear that "what is being proposed as an alternative is not the socialist system . . . but rather a *society of free work, of enterprise, and of participation*. Such a society is not directed against the market, but demands that the market be appropriately controlled by the forces of society and by the state, so as to guarantee that the basic needs of the whole society are satisfied."

In *Centesimus Annus* the Pope is not so much criticizing capitalism as "an economic system" as he is assailing "an ethical and cultural system" for not informing it and domesticating it of its excesses. The failure to thus inform, educate, and regulate will lead to "an 'idolatry' of the market" in which "economic life is absolutized" and "production and consumption of goods become the center of social life and society's only value."

The Pope sums up the very real and important contribution of this encyclical best himself:

> The theological dimension is needed both for interpreting and solving present-day problems in human society. It is worth noting that this is true in contrast both to the "atheistic" solution, which deprives man of one of his basic dimensions, namely the spiritual one, and to permissive and consumerist solutions, which under various pretexts seek to convince man that he is free from every law and from God himself, thus imprisoning him within a selfishness which ultimately harms both him and others.

While *Centesimus Annus* is a Roman Catholic document in the most literal and official meaning of that term, it is also a catholic document in a far more universal sense. It is addressed by the Pope ultimately "to all men and women of good will." There is a gold mine of material in this encyclical to sustain years of ecumenical dialogue with Protestants and other people of faith. I hope and pray evangelical Protestants especially will interact vigorously with the important issues raised and the far-reaching conclusions suggested by this historic document. □

Shirley Robin Letwin

TO CONCLUDE that the encyclical *Centesimus Annus* rejects socialism and Marxism and endorses a market economy is entirely reasonable. There are a number of explicit statements to that effect. Sound reasons for rejecting socialism are firmly asserted: Socialism encourages envy of the rich; it reduces individuals to parts of "the socio-economic mechanism"; it fails to recognize the person as an "autonomous subject of moral decision"; it renders individuals wholly dependent on "the social machine and on those who control it."

In all this, the encyclical clearly repudiates socialism and develops the tradition of Christian thought articulated by St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas. But when it turns to the details of "the social doctrine" which the Church now commends, the encyclical both departs from that tradition and moves toward what it appears to reject.

What is missing, first of all, is an emphasis on the impossibility of assimilating the earthly city to the heavenly city. Although we are told that "there can be no genuine solution of the 'social question' apart from the Gospel," there is nothing like St. Augustine's ringing denunciation of the Christian who attempts to mold the community in which he lives to some ideal pattern instead of merely trying to safeguard an area within which he can conduct himself as he believes he should. Yet it is by their pursuit of perfect justice that socialists have produced the worst disasters.

What is missing secondly is a sharp distinction between the certainty of a geometrical demonstration and the inescapable uncertainty of the conclusions of practical reasoning. Yet that distinction was emphasized by both St. Augustine and St. Thomas throughout their discussions of human law. They taught that there can be no indisputably good law, that human justice is inextricably mixed with injustice, that all social arrangements are necessarily contingent and disputable, that what is suitable for one time and place may be wholly unsuitable for another.

Instead the encyclical sets out a catalogue of universal prescriptions as if they could secure justice everywhere. It requires that workers should participate in trade unions and in the management of industry, and calls for "a special effort to mobilize resources . . . for the purpose of economic growth and common development." No effort is made to recognize or answer the considerable literature arguing that trade unions and workers' participation in management contribute neither to the worker's dignity nor to his economic well-being, and that aid to underdeveloped countries has done far more harm than good. The spirit in which the encyclical commends private property is strikingly different from that of St. Thomas Aquinas. He stressed that the desirability of private property—which he accepted—could not be deduced from natural law and could only be established by practical reasoning, which meant that it could not be an indisputable truth. And when the encyclical says that "the state has a duty to sustain business activities by . . . stimulating those activities where they are lacking," it is endorsing socialism in its currently fashionable form of corporatism.

For all the denunciations of socialism, there is no recognition that what fundamentally distinguishes it from a free society is the difference between an *universitas* and a *societas*, which was spelt out by St. Augustine. The former treats all social arrangements and individuals as means for achieving a given objective. In a *societas*, the distinctive function of the state is not to pursue any objective but to maintain rules which enable individuals to go about their self-chosen projects in peace. In other words, it lays down the rules of the road; it does not plan itineraries. What makes such a community free is that the social order emerges indirectly from the choices of individuals, shaped by obligatory subscription to procedural rules of law. It is not imposed from above.

Because this is the character of a free society, in order to promote it as an ideal for the whole Christian world, the Church cannot go beyond fairly abstract statements about respect for personhood and the nature of social arrangements that permit such respect to flourish. It can teach Christians to appreciate the possibility and desirability of achieving social order indirectly through the unintended consequences of individual choices, rather than through blueprints for securing "rights." It can explain the folly of prescribing the same practical arrangements for all times and places.

In short, if the Church wishes to repudiate the spirit—and not just the appearance—of socialism, it ought to renounce, rather than celebrate, promulgating a "social doctrine" in the sense of *Rerum Novarum*. □

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Kenneth Minogue

THE POPE is the Chief Executive Officer of the greatest multinational corporation in history. Specializing in moral and theological products, it dominates its market the way IBM dominates computers, and smaller competitors (such as the Episcopa-

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lians) often try to combine Catholic-compatible components without losing their own special appeal. The Catholic Church thus has to discharge responsibilities beyond its own boundaries without succumbing to the intellectual overstretch which has caused it trouble in the past. It has wisely sold off its earlier commitments to geocentricity and creationism, but in the new encyclical *Centesimus Annus* the Pope is advancing a plan for the entire world on the basis of the religion of only part of that world.

The question about the new encyclical, then, is whether Catholicism is being sold to the world, or the world taking over Catholicism. In the encyclical *Rerum Novarum* of 1891, which the present document celebrates, the Church had moved with some reluctance into "the social question." The reason for the reluctance is obvious. A church is founded on moral and theological beliefs, and would be wise to avoid committing itself to any particular social and political arrangements. The conventional wisdom of the last hundred years, however, has been that these things cannot be separated. Hating atheistic socialism, therefore, and condemning liberalism as an error, the Church moved into the social market with a form of Christian social doctrine which greatly influenced Continental (but not Anglo-Saxon) politics over the last century.

John Paul II has moved on a long way. Liberalism has enjoyed a modified triumph in that the new encyclical is awash with rights of every kind—rights of workers, of nations, to private property, to conscience, and so on. Usually there is an implicit "but" hooked onto these rights, which would be spelled out in terms of Catholic natural-law doctrine. Nevertheless, the Pope has gone along with a great deal of the individualist moral terminology so popular today. His basic message is a form of coercive moralism: "Violence and resentment can be overcome by justice" is what *Rerum Novarum* was supposed to have taught. If this opinion really was advanced as a truth rather than an aspiration, we can only say that it is false. The problem is, precisely, that people do not agree on justice, and when parties locked in conflict also both believe in the justice of their cause, the original problem simply gets worse.

One critic has described the encyclical as "schizoid," and different passages certainly seem to advance opposing doctrines. But insofar as there is a clear doctrine emerging, it may be described as moral managerialism. Other terms to describe this feature of the argument would be rationalism, paternalism, and constructivism. The conflicting and dynamic aspirations of the modern world are to be shaped so that they fit into a single organic scheme for the satisfaction of all human needs. Thus when the Pope criticizes consumerism, as well he might, he thinks of it as an external influencing principle from which people must be saved, rather than as a symptom of the sinful tendency to idolatry to be expected from fallen creatures. People are ensnared, he writes, "in a web of false and superficial gratifications rather than *being helped to experience* their personhood in an authentic and concrete way" (p. 79). This is the language of contemporary moralism rather than the theology of Christianity, and I have italicized the managerial passive voice which dominates the conception of a world policy for worldly salvation with which we are presented.

"What is called for is a special effort to mobilize resources, which are not lacking in the world as a whole, for the purpose of economic growth and common development, redefining the priorities and hierarchies of values on the basis of which economic and political choices are made" (p. 55). This remarkable passage dramatically illustrates how the spirit of the times hops over the barriers of conflict to dominate all parties, for it is the purest expression of central planning as the solution to big problems. Many have responded to the encyclical by judging the Pope to have come out in favor of capitalism, even if a somewhat "bridled" capitalism. It is indeed true that profit is recognized as a legitimate economic factor in judging the viability of productive enterprise, but what this Polish Pope cannot recognize is that capitalism is inseparable from risk and a certain kind of game playing. Profit is to entrepreneurs what goals are to footballers, and both activities are essentially competitive. But an economy is not merely competitive; it is also open-ended. Where it will lead we do not know. This encyclical resembles a lot of socialist literature in assuming that the basic problem is management and distribution.

There is thus a failure of match between the new and welcome recognition of the values of a free society on the one hand, and Aristotelian organicism on the other. And the reason may well be a significant tension between the Christian religion and the way in which the modern world has developed. Just as umbrella manufacturers prosper best in wet seasons, so religion is the thing for adversity. It is indeed the great thing to console us in circumstances of oppression. While Communist tyranny is an unmistakable evil, capitalist affluence may well be more of a threat to the Church. ☐

Richard John Neuhaus

THERE were grim rumors about a new social encyclical that would harshly and unfairly attack the United States and democratic capitalism. Only nine months a Catholic, I was supposed to brace myself for a testing of my obedience to the Church's authority. Nonsense, I thought, and nonsense those rumors turned out to be. Mind you, I was prepared to work hard at giving my conscientious assent, come what may. I was resolved to "put the best construction on everything," as Martin Luther was fond of saying (even if he didn't always follow his own counsel). As it happens, however, I scarcely know which parts of *Centesimus Annus* to embrace most warmly. In truth, it is all of a piece.

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There is, for instance, John Paul's grounding of social thought in a profound anthropology and theology of human freedom. To miss this is to miss the main point of *Centesimus Annus*. I am sure there are folk who will take from the encyclical only the slogan, "The Pope Loves Capitalism!" Too bad. As important as the affirmation of capitalism (or, as John Paul prefers, "the free economy") undoubtedly is, it is more important to understand *why* the Pope contends that economic freedom is required in a Christian understanding of human nature and destiny.

Others might most enjoy the drubbing John Paul gives socialism, along with, to paraphrase the Book of Common Prayer, all its works, the vain pomp and glory, and covetous desires of the same. Those parts of *Centesimus Annus* are fun but, as the Pope makes clear, socialism is a dead horse as an economic system. He wants us to understand *why* socialism was such a human disaster. Its great evil—and he does call it evil, just as he calls the power that imposed socialism an empire—was its atheism. In practice, the Pope warns us, "consumerism" can be equally atheistic. Man is made for "freedom that is ordered to truth," and, above all, to the transcendent truth that is God. Consumerism is the reduction of man to a consumption unit, and the reduction of a society to nothing more than a system producing and acquiring ever more goods and services.

The Pope believes that consumerism is a very big problem for us in the economically advanced countries, and I have no doubt that he is right. As he makes emphatically clear, it is not a problem with our system of economics but with the state of our souls. It is to be remedied not economically but culturally and spiritually. Since the appearance of *Centesimus Annus*, we have heard from the defenders of the status quo in the teaching of Catholic morality that John Paul blames consumerism on capitalism. That, too, is nonsense. They miss, willfully or otherwise, the gravamen of the Pope's argument. He is telling us that economics is not the most important thing about man. To attribute everything to the economic factor is to perpetuate the terrible lie of the Marxists. In addition to the economic is the political and, most important of all, the cultural. At the heart of the cultural is the moral and spiritual.

The Pope writes, "It would appear that, on the level of individual nations and of international relations, *the free market* is the most efficient instrument for utilizing resources and effectively responding to needs" (emphasis in original). Some interpreters seem to think that that statement is the big news in *Centesimus Annus*. John Paul clearly does not agree. Let it be stipulated once and for all, he is saying, that the free economy is the way to go in meeting man's material needs. Having stipulated that, let's then move on to the much more important questions pertinent to being truly human. "There are many human needs which find no place on the market," he writes. "Thus the first and most important task is accomplished within man's heart. The way in which he is involved in building his own future depends on the understanding he has of himself and of his own destiny. It is on this level that the *Church's specific and decisive contribution to true culture* is to be found."

But to pick out a few parts of this encyclical is to slight others. I am loath to ignore, for instance, the marvelous explanation of why the individual, voluntary associations, and society itself are all prior to the state in dignity and rights. I have been writing for years about the crucial role of "mediating structures" in social policy, and I confess to being very pleased indeed to have the Pope so forcefully urging the redesign of the welfare state to empower what he calls the "intermediate groups" in society. That all has to do with the principle of "subsidiarity," which has a venerable place in Catholic social teaching but has seldom been set forth so luminously. Here, too, John Paul is posing a very bold challenge to us in the more developed countries.

And what should I say about "the preferential option for the poor"? In *Centesimus Annus*, the Pope takes that worthy but much abused phrase and turns it in most constructive directions. The poor of the world are not oppressed because of capitalism, he teaches, but because of the absence of capitalism. More precisely, poor nations have been "marginalized" (and have sometimes marginalized themselves) from the world economy, and the poor in rich nations are marginalized from what he calls the circle of productive work and exchange. Exactly right, it seems to me. The trouble is not with the system of a free economy but with the fact that so many are not included in it, or are not including themselves.

To the extent that the system is excluding them, it needs to be remedied. But the Pope is adamant in insisting that the remedy must be to make the economy more, not less, free and open. He expresses a robust skepticism toward state interventions in the market. State interventions, he says, no matter how well intended, almost always turn out to be oppressive and stifling. The less the poor look to the state and the more they look to themselves for the realization of their own potential, the Pope contends, the better off they will be. But they do need help from others, and John Paul takes business leaders in particular to task for not doing enough on that score. He is undoubtedly right about that, too.

But space forbids. Obviously, my ecclesial obedience is in no way tested by *Centesimus Annus*. Such a testing might have been good for my soul. No doubt there will be other occasions for finding out about that. ☐

Jacob Neusner

THE POWER of *Centesimus Annus*, a document worthy, in the majesty of its profound vision of humanity, of the august office of its author, derives from the insistence that social policy effect theological anthropology. Christianity and Judaism view

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humanity as "in God's image," using the Biblical language, "in our image, after our likeness." A coherent account of the social order, such as the magisterium has now set forth for the faithful, then flows from the theological vision of in what way we are "like God." The pathos of this document is in its limited grasp of large conflict. The Pope sees a smiling face for humanity. But the face of humanity is not always smiling. Hence the encyclical's insistence ("war never again") that war never does good and never is just; its explanation of how humanity does gain a clear advantage over evil; and its account of the source of human misery—all attest to an awry perception of us "in our image, after our likeness."

1. "War never again" does not tell us what to do when an Iraq grabs a Kuwait. The explicit condemnation of President Bush's leadership is deplorable.

2. The Pope explains what happened in 1989 as "an example of the willingness to negotiate and of the Gospel spirit in the face of an adversary determined not to be bound by moral principles." Maybe so. But if the Communists could have held onto their empire, they would have. If they could have added Western Europe, the Gospel spirit would not have stopped their tanks. NATO kept them at bay. The patient, indomitable spirit of the American people, embodied in President Reagan's "evil empire" speech, as much as Christianity, explains the *annus mirabilis*, 1989. We stood firm; they gave way.

3. The Pope's account of why the Third and Fourth Worlds wallow in misery expresses his noble theological anthropology. But he does not invoke as reasons for the human degradation of much of Asia, Africa, and Latin America the facts of overpopulation, venal, corrupt politics, and distributive economics. If we are in God's image, then I suppose some imagine there cannot be too many of us. But clearly there are. Silence on the matter of family planning reminds us of the unhappy encyclical on birth control, implausible to Catholics, as Father Andrew Greeley has demonstrated, and irrelevant to others. With all my heart I affirm that abortion as post-facto birth control is murder. But, along with critics even in the Church, many must regret that the absence of family planning plays no role in the Pope's picture of the distortion of the human image in the Third and Fourth Worlds.

For these reasons I find in the implicit theological anthropology of the encyclical a somewhat limited account of what it means to be humanity "in God's image." The proposed theory of the social order loses its clear focus, I think, because of its astigmatic vision of who we are and what it means to bear God's image as we do. Others, with a different account of humanity in God's image, are then left to cope with conflict and contradiction, forming for themselves a more nuanced, perhaps more complex, anthropology to tell us how to live, yes, in God's image, but also in the realm of the tough reality that God has made for us, and of us. It is time for a theological debate on the social order, and the theologians too—Christian, Judaic, and Muslim alike—bear responsibility for their views of public policy. For it is clear, these days, the world is listening. The other gods have failed; it is time, now, for God. The intellectual elegance of *Centesimus Annus* has won for theology a solemn hearing. But to speak in God's name, we have still to persuade humanity. □

Gerhart Niemeyer

GLOBAL politics has slid into a new period that deserves to be called "totalitarianism in reform." We are faced with wholly unprecedented phenomena and problems to which our old generalities and clichés do not apply. If we use them anyway, the results are ridiculous. A case in point is the habit of otherwise serious thinkers of speaking of Communist hard-liners as "conservatives" and, when this meets with raised eyebrows, to explain lamely: "It is because they desire to preserve their tradition." As if there could be any such thing as a tradition of Communism! Thus few people have anything of real insight to say in this situation. *Centesimus Annus*, however, has much to say, and it speaks "as one having authority, and not like the scribes."

The encyclical, on principle, endorses our economic system from a point of view that embraces all of human life and human nature. Nor does it praise vaguely. It mentions specifically "the fundamental and positive role of business, the market, private property, and the resulting responsibility for the means of production, as well as free human creativity in the economic sector" (p. 82). Does this approval leave out anything essential? The Pope dislikes the term "capitalism"; he prefers "business economy," "market economy," or "free economy." Who would object? True, some details of the analysis might have been more accurate. Thus the market is not "an instrument"; rather, in the midst of millions of subjective interests seeking relation, it is the sole objective reality that permits comparative valuations, and, because it does not depend on any particular human will, serves as a guarantee of individual freedom. Then again, profit is not "legitimate" merely "as an indication that a business is functioning

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well"; it must also be seen as the source of capital required for improvement, growth, innovation.

Along with this praise, however, comes a severe, profound, and precise critique of the West. Americans may rejoice because, insofar as this critique demands the creation of certain additional institutions in capitalist societies, we find that we already have them. But the Pope's attack on "consumerism" we cannot evade. He defines it as "a style of life which is presumed to be better when it is directed toward 'having' rather than 'being' " (p. 72). The Pope also chastises "the poverty and narrowness of man's outlook" when, regarding nature, he "sets himself up in place of God" (p. 73). We have heard a similar criticism before, from Solzhenitsyn, to which we reacted by closing out from our mind and our memory not only his words but also his person. I believe these criticisms to be true, so I should hope that we will take this recent one seriously.

If I, in turn, dare to be critical of the encyclical, it is not from a motive of self-defense. The encyclical's critique of the West seems to be more institutional than it need and should have been. All too often it treats Marxism as "a philosophy," also an attempt to "solve" a serious social problem, "the worker question." Now Marx certainly was no philosopher (lover of wisdom), but an ideologue, together with other ideologues, Auguste Comte, Mikhail Bakunin, Georges Sorel, and many more. Common to them all was a Romantic ambition to make a new reality, create a new man, dominate and complete history, in other words, "save" mankind while rejecting God and transcendence. It was such Promethean ambition that Aeschylus described as "no small madness." Insofar as the ideologues linked their basic will to power with some human grievance, they "exploited" injustice and oppression for their own ulterior motives (p. 51). Ideologies had become possible in the nineteenth century, because the Enlightenment had destroyed "authentic philosophy" (p. 37) by perverting the concept of reason into that of an exclusively human power tool with unlimited possibilities, to which Romantic thinking added the Promethean vision. The West thus suffers not so much from institutional ills as from a crisis of the spirit ("pneumopathology" was Schelling's name for it). The armed ideological movements and regimes of our time are like big festering boils on a diseased body. The boils have burst, finally also in the East. The virus causing the disease, however, persists in the West. Such symbols of philosophic insight as the concepts "being," "nature," "soul," "man," and "transcendence" have utterly gone from the professional literature, academic teaching, and jurisprudence. In their absence, we experience disorientation, or "alienation," as the encyclical calls it (pp. 79–80).

The Pope's warning to us not to consider ourselves as the global "victor" whose order must be a model to all the world should be heeded, in any case. We must realize that "totalitarianism in reform" is not just "their" problem but ours, too. Most of the Eastern European nations attained freedom without violence. Nor were the workers the ones who everywhere marched in front. From great and long-endured suffering these peoples found the courage to say No! to the despotism of untruth. That means, however, that our relation to these peoples must not be that of a rich uncle toward a poor country relative. Rather, it is a meeting of one kind of poverty with another. If they lack productive property, as well as capital and managerial skills, our poverty is "the loss of the authentic meaning of life" (p. 79). The meeting must not be one of giving on one side and taking on the other, but rather giving and taking between each other, different gifts for different needs, and together a great effort to move toward the freedom of truth (p. 90). □

Michael Novak

THE ENCYCLICAL *Centesimus Annus* does everything that many of us had hoped for from some Church authority; *viz.*, capture the spirit and essence of the American experiment in political economy. The Pope showed an extraordinary grasp of American ideas, achievements, and points of view. His vision of a free economy, within a culture moral and religious to its core, guided and energized by a democratic polity, is American in spirit and definition. Thus, Pope John Paul II has brought economic liberty (plus democracy) into Catholic social teaching, just as Vatican II brought religious liberty. In both cases, these are predominantly American contributions to the Church universal. This alone was a monumental cause for celebration, but there was another, decidedly minor, circumstance.

Just as *Centesimus Annus* came out, John Cort, the Catholic democratic socialist, was describing my views on capitalism as "heresy" in the May *Catholic Worker*. *Commonweal* was bashing the Lay Letter, the committee for which William Simon and I chaired in 1984. And NATIONAL REVIEW was denounced by Father Richard McBrien as a flagrant "dissenter" from Pope John XXIII's *Mater et Magistra* (1961). After reading all this and then reading *Centesimus Annus*, no wonder many of us heard in our hearts for several days the surging sound of a *Te Deum*.

The big points in this encyclical will surely be covered by other writers in this symposium. So let me concentrate on a few small points, since it is in its details that this papal letter shows its true brilliance. Just one example: On pages 92–95, the Pope alludes to the desperate need poor families have of jobs. But instead of declaring a Humphrey–Hawkins "right to work" that the state will enforce, he writes: "Primary responsibility [for human rights in the economic sector] belongs not to the state but to individuals and to the various groups and associations which make up society." Then comes the sentence I really love: "The state

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could not directly ensure the right to work for all its citizens unless it controlled every aspect of economic life and restricted the free initiative of individuals." Thus, having experienced the prison fashioned by the Marxist version of "economic rights," the Pope pops that notion of rights on its glass chin, and the fragments fall to the floor.

Another detail shines out in the section on drugs, which the Pope points to as a sign of "consumerism" at its worst: "These criticisms are directed not so much against an economic system as against an ethical and cultural system." What a neat—and accurate—way of putting it.

Throughout, this philosophically trained Pope distinguishes the three separate but related systems of advanced free societies: the political system, the economic system, and the moral-cultural system. To each he gives its due; and its due also to their necessary unity, as checks and balances to each other. (It does not seem hard for a person trained to discuss the Trinity to grasp a concept of three-in-one.)

If in Vatican II Rome accepted American ideas of religious liberty, now Rome has assimilated American ideas of economic liberty.

Further neat distinctions are made (for the first time in a papal document) between human capital and capital based on land; between nations in the "South" that are poor and those that use human capital to create much wealth despite their lack of natural resources; and on the chief causes of the wealth of nations—not a Marxist "labor theory of value," but enterprise, innovation, organizing skill, and creativity: "Today the decisive factor increasingly is *man himself*, that is, his knowledge, especially his scientific knowledge, his capacity for interrelated and compact organization, as well as his ability to perceive the needs of others and to satisfy them." His further elaboration of new modern virtues such as enterprise, initiative, creativity, and civic responsibility is also superb.

Most important of all, perhaps, is the extended attention given throughout *Centesimus Annus* to the moral and cultural sector of life—how it impinges on political economy, often inspiring, correcting, and guiding it, while imparting to it dynamism and character. A Pope who has experienced both Communist and free societies understands instantly the economic differences that moral/cultural factors give rise to. For free societies in the twenty-first century, questions of culture and morals are likely to be near the top of the agenda. Amid rising tides of intellectual relativism and moral sickness, free societies face real problems in developing their human capital and in maintaining against human weakness the intense pressure of judgment by the Almighty, whence springs so much social dynamism (cf. Abraham Lincoln).

Finally, the Pope describes the views of those (like Richard Rorty, Arthur Schlesinger, and many others in this country) who argue that only agnosticism, relativism, and unbelief keep democracy safe: "Those who are convinced that they know the truth and firmly adhere to it are considered unreliable from a democratic point of view." Then, recalling recent experiences under Marxism, the Pope turns the tables on them:

> It must be observed in this regard that if there is no ultimate truth to guide and direct political activity, then ideas and convictions can easily be manipulated for reasons of power. As history demonstrates, a democracy without values easily turns into open or thinly disguised totalitarianism.

Let me state it as clearly as I can: *Centesimus Annus* is a great encyclical, the greatest in a hundred years. It is the single best statement in our lifetime by the Catholic Church, or any other religious body, of the moral vision of a political economy such as that of the United States. That is why even Pope John Paul's diagnosis of serious faults in such systems is not offensive; his criticism hoists us on our own ideals. It is, so to speak, criticism "from within." It is as if the Pope had written: "We hold these truths in faith: that all men are created equal and endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, among which are the right to life, etc." Quite recognizable, that.

If in Vatican II, Rome accepted American ideas of religious liberty, in *Centesimus Annus* Rome has assimilated American ideas of economic liberty. Moreover, the Pope has brought Rome to understand liberty as Americans do:

Confirm thy soul in self-control
Thy liberty in law.

Look again at the Statue of Liberty: holding aloft the lamp of reason, in her other hand the Book of the Law, and bearing a visage as stern and purposive as that of any third-grade teacher in the history of our land. ☐

Robert A. Sirico

TO GRASP the authentic significance of *Centesimus Annus* requires a blend of two approaches. First, read it on its own merits. As objectively as possible, one can interpret its various passages to discern its thrust and priorities on the basis of the text of the encyclical itself.

Second, read the document in the context of the previous social pronouncements by the Catholic teaching office over the past one hundred years, and see what new

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themes, developments, and directions the present one initiates.

When read for itself, *Centesimus Annus* emerges as an uncompromising rejection of collectivism in its Marxist, Communist, socialist, and even welfare-statist manifestations. While the encyclical allows for a certain amount of intervention by the state in such areas as wage levels, social security, unemployment insurance, and the like, *Centesimus Annus* expresses repeated concern for observing the principle of subsidiarity, and warns against the effects of intervention both on the economic prosperity of a nation and on the persons' dignity and their rights.

Centesimus Annus, then, indicates a decided preference for what it calls the "business economy," "market economy," or "free economy," rooted in a legal, ethical, and religious framework. While it rejects the notion that such a free economic system meets all human needs, it distinguishes the economic system from the ethical and cultural context in which it exists. In this way *Centesimus Annus* can criticize the excesses of materialism and consumerism and still endorse capitalism as essentially in accord with Christianity.

The second way of reading this encyclical reveals it as an even more dramatic document. When read with an awareness of modern Catholic social thought, beginning with Leo XIII's *Rerum Novarum*, its historical import surfaces. *Centesimus Annus* evidences the greatest depth of economic understanding and the most deliberate (and least critical) embrace of the system of free exchange on the part of Catholic teaching authority in one hundred years, and possibly since the Middle Ages. Moreover, it contains a modern appreciation for the dynamic nature of free exchange and the way in which wealth is produced.

When seen in this way, *Centesimus Annus* represents the beginnings of a shift away from the static, zero-sum economic world view which led the Church to be suspicious of capitalism and to argue for wealth distribution as the only moral response to poverty.

There are several dimensions to this new direction worth considering.

The first is the clear difference in thrust and direction apparent when *Centesimus Annus* is read alongside the 1986 U.S. bishops' letter, "Economic Justice for All." Where the Pope virtually celebrates the virtues required for entrepreneurship, the American bishops look askance upon market activity and see it as redeemable only to the extent that it can be harnessed by government. Similarly, the Pope, even when he accepts the need for some interventions, does so begrudgingly, and goes to great lengths to limit them and demands that they be withdrawn as soon as possible. The bishops' document, on the other hand, offers an energetic advocacy of an expansive role of state interventions. The social-justice establishment has been left unprepared to consider social questions from within the framework the Pope has constructed in *Centesimus Annus*. When one reads over the material these ecclesiastical cognoscenti have produced it becomes evident that they are unfamiliar with the Continental economic tradition represented by Wilhelm Röpke, Ludwig von Mises, F. A. Hayek, and Israel Kirzner, as well as the insights of the Virginia public-choice school and others.

A further implication of this encyclical is that entrepreneurs and capitalists have been invited in out of the moral cold to which they felt exiled in the past. The Holy Father has affirmed their basic vocation and role, even while he challenges them to look beyond the economic bottom line and consider the moral dimensions of their work.

A third implication is that this encyclical constitutes the epitaph for liberation and collectivist movements in terms of any official ecclesiastical legitimacy. The "Christian–Marxist dialogue" is dead, as even Gustavo Gutierrez, father of liberation theology, has recently conceded.

Centesimus Annus indicates a turn toward authentic human liberty as a principle for social organization on the part of the world's largest Christian religion. Thus a new dialogue has begun.

This latest encyclical will go down in history alongside Vatican II's *Dignitatis Humanae*, on religious liberty, as representing the impact the American experiment has had on the teaching of the universal Church. What *Dignitatis Humanae* did to open the Church to the rights of conscience and religious liberty, *Centesimus Annus* will do to open the Church to a full and vigorous dialogue with the idea of economic liberty. It is an idea which began with Catholic scholarship as seen in the Scholastics; it is fitting that it should be retrieved by this Pope. ☐

Jozef Tischner

NATIONS WHICH have endured the historical experiment of Communism, lured by the promise of "progress," are horrified to discover that they are now surrounded on all sides by ruins—ruined economies, ruined state institutions, ruined people. The destruction of private property and the devastation of economic life as an aftermath of uncritical faith in the omnipotence of a planned economy is most striking. But hand in hand with economic disintegration goes the disintegration of political life—an outcome of totalitarianism. The breakdown of the economy and the polity inevitably affects individuals who were victims or executors of the system. Totalitarian rule consists in subordination and creates subordinates. After its fall, old habits do not disappear. You may see inscriptions on city walls in Poland saying: "Commies—come back." Their authors are people of whom the liberalization of the economy and politics demands something they are incapable of—a personal responsibility for their own ac-

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tions. After a final decay of social structures imposed by Communism, it is evident that Communism's material ravages are small compared with the destruction of the internal, spiritual world of the individual.

Whatever one might say about the *Centesimus Annus* encyclical, one fact is undisputable: its author, John Paul II, is one of very few people in the West fully to recognize the extent of the devastation resulting from Communism, not only in terms of economics and politics, but primarily within man himself. John Paul II knows that it is not enough to pull down the external structures of Communism, it must also be overcome internally in each human being.

I myself am an inhabitant of a ruined land. With so many others, I ask: Why did Communism fall? I understand the breakdown of the economy, I understand the ineffectiveness of the bureaucracy. But the real reason lies elsewhere: rebellious man. Freedom was born in an enslaved world. Free people overthrew Communism. Therefore, I find the following passage of the encyclical particularly important: "the fundamental error of socialism is anthropological in nature. Socialism considers the individual person simply as an element, a molecule within the social organism, so that the good of the individual is completely subordinated to the functioning of the socio-economic mechanism. Socialism also maintains that the well-being of the individual can be realized without reference to his free choice, to the unique and exclusive responsibility which he exercises in the face of good or evil" (p. 27). And, at a different point: "Not only is it wrong from the ethical point of view to disregard human nature, which is made for freedom, but in practice it is impossible to do so" (p. 48). Socialism's "anthropological mistake" is the encyclical's recurring theme. While criticizing the Communist concept of man, the encyclical reminds us of the Christian vision: "Indeed, it is through the free gift of self that man truly finds himself" (p. 80). This is not a theoretical abstraction. In a world ruled by Communists there appeared heroes—overthrowing Communism. It is not a "man with growing needs," not a "consuming man" who has achieved this historical aim, but a responsibly free man.

In addition to diagnosing Communism's failure, one who, like me, lives among post-Communist ruins expected the encyclical to instruct him in two basic fields: the economy and political life.

As far as the economy goes, Marxist criticisms of the free market, criticisms of profit and private ownership, are still fresh in our mind. In social consciousness there still live unrealistic myths about the functioning of a market economy—many dream of capitalist wealth without the capitalist effort. That's why a clear and comprehensive moral legitimation of the basic principles of a liberal economy is of the utmost importance. As the encyclical states: "It would appear that, on the level of individual nations and of international relations, *the free market* is the most efficient instrument for utilizing resources and effectively responding to needs" (p. 66). This legitimation is not in contradiction with what the author says about the threat of "alienation" of labor. John Paul II gives a new meaning to the notion of "alienation," used and abused by Marxists: it consists of a "reversal of relations between means and aims." Man is not for the economy, but the economy for man.

As regards politics, the basic issue is restructuring the state. The assumptions John Paul II makes in this respect are vital. He defends the concept of a "legally governed country," "appreciates democracy," acknowledges "the principle of subsidiarity" as the basis of state operation, and reminds the state of its moral obligation to intervene in economic life, particularly where poverty is concerned, and in cultural life. He does not share the view that the philosophy of a democratic state should be "agnosticism and skeptical relativity"; rather it should be "an appropriate concept of the human being." The state should protect human rights. John Paul II juxtaposes the fallen totalitarian state to a state of the "rule of law," with a strong ethical element. In such a state there is a place for the Church, because it operates on the principle of "respecting freedom." Does this imply that all questions have been answered? The architects of new states in the post-Communist era must face the problem of how state legislation, which must be binding upon everyone, should be harmonized with the principles and norms of ethical systems which, in a pluralistic society, are diverse and often contradictory. In Poland, these are the grounds for debates about the introduction of religion to schools, abortion, contraception, the "attitudes" of state officials, etc.

The encyclical is particularly important for post-Communist countries. It is addressed to people who still very vividly remember Communism. It teaches responsibility. For Poles it is all the more important, as it speaks about Poland, Solidarity, a peaceful struggle, which "required a presence of mind, restraint, suffering, and sacrifice." John Paul II attributes special meaning to the Polish events. I wonder if the time has come to compare what took place in Poland with the French Revolution, and to consider whether what had been initiated—in a certain sense—by that Revolution was not halted by the Polish "revolution," and whether the success of overthrowing Communism is comparable with the success of overthrowing feudalism. □

Ernest van den Haag

AFTER Galileo Galilei muttered, *"Eppur, si muove"*—his mumble heard throughout Europe—the Roman Catholic Church abandoned its fitful practice of subordinating the discoveries of the natural sciences to theological dogma. Scientific discoveries no longer were heretical and, *ipso facto*, false

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when inconsistent with the Scriptural interpretations of official theologians. Science became autonomous to coexist with theology.

Some centuries later Pope Leo XIII recognized a social development unthinkable without the post-Renaissance independence of the natural sciences: the Industrial Revolution. In *Rerum Novarum* the Pope noted the advantages of industry, but also its dehumanizing effects. He defended the right of workers to form unions and insisted on a duty of the state to regulate working conditions to avoid the exploitation of workers. Yet the Pope also defended private property.

In *Centesimus Annus* John Paul II celebrates the anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*, reflects on its themes, and elaborates on some. His predecessor already had termed socialism *medicina pejor morbus*. Confronted with its collapse throughout Eastern Europe, John Paul now asks whether capitalism is an acceptable economic system. More explicitly than Leo XIII, John Paul endorses profits and the private ownership of means of production. He calls the free market "the most efficient instrument for utilizing resources and effectively responding to needs." Adam Smith at last has been seen in Rome.

The endorsement of capitalism remains qualified. The Holy Father repudiates some characteristics of contemporary life which he deems related to capitalism, such as "consumerism." But "consumerism" is simply a combination of acquisitiveness and hedonism and began with Adam's fall. If "consumerism" is particularly conspicuous now, it is because many people, who never before had an opportunity to consume much, now are prosperous enough to do so. I don't think this is so bad. What is bad, however, is that many people try to fulfill themselves through shopping. John Paul II stresses that this is a morally inferior and psychologically unsatisfactory pseudo-fulfillment. Unfortunately religion, which can make life meaningful beyond shopping, no longer seems available to many consumers. I do not know how to strengthen it; nor does the Holy See. Perhaps prayer and its own futility will reduce consumerism in time.

Following the Gospels, the Church always has been concerned with the poor, exhorting us all to charity. As to the causes and cures of poverty, ecclesiastical doctrines have not been helpful. They never went beyond the *pretium justum*, the "fair price" (or "living wage") medieval theologians postulated. This notion is still shared by legislators, union leaders, and bishops—none learned in economics and some willfully ignorant. Are German wages higher than English wages because the Germans are more just? Which wages are fair? Are wages low in Pakistan, or Mexico, because employers in those countries are less generous than Americans? Surely wages depend on productivity, which depends on factors properly discussed in economic treatises, not in encyclicals or pastoral letters. Yet, although John Paul repudiates the socialism of liberation theologians and the crypto-socialism of some of his fellow bishops, and even has reservations about the welfare state, he does not fully recognize that prices, including the price of labor, no more depend on moral or legal norms than the laws of physics do. Nor is calling them just (or unjust) more helpful than calling the laws of physics just or unjust.

Centuries ago the Church recognized that the findings of the natural sciences cannot be made to conform to theological doctrines. Perhaps the time has come to recognize that prices, including wages, the price of labor, cannot be determined by legal or moral norms, that economic laws are as independent of moral desiderata as physical laws are. *Centesimus Annus* does not quite take this step. Yet it moves in the right direction by explicitly repudiating the nostrums of liberation theology and of its episcopal fans.

Does this mean that morality has no role in economic matters? Far from it. Economics cannot be reduced to morality, however. Morality is an addition to, not a replacement of, physical or social laws. They are the conditions surrounding morality. There is a moral dimension to all human activity. Recognizing economic laws in no way eliminates that dimension which John Paul II rightly extols as the foundation of human solidarity.

John Paul II justly celebrates the reassertion of the moral dimension of human life after the collapse of violent attempts by totalitarians to deny it. But the Holy Father also reminds us that without belief in God and in salvation morality atrophies and therewith the human bonds which animate society. Thus, the successor to the Apostles exhorts us to faith and charity. *Utinam*: may his voice be heard. □

George Weigel

THE ENCYCLICAL *Centesimus Annus* is a marvelously rich document: a synopsis of the key elements of a century of Catholic social teaching; a devastating critique of the human failures of Communism and a penetrating analysis of the Revolution of 1989; and a bold proposal for the future development of Catholic social thought in the new historical, political, and economic circumstances of the twenty-first century.

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The common thread linking these three dimensions is John Paul II's profound meditation on human freedom, a characteristic concern of the Pope's since his 1979 inaugural encyclical, *Redemptor Hominis*.

Happily, the Pope's theology of freedom will displease both the world's few remaining Marxists and, perhaps more importantly, those currents of Enlightenment thought (entrenched in many of the tenured redoubts of the American university world) which dismiss any notion of transcendent norms for the ordering of personal and social life as an epistemological fantasy. (Richard Rorty, please call the Vatican.) Indeed, in a pleasant irony that would not be lost on Lord Acton (whose relationship to Rome in the wake of the First Vatican Council was, well, rather chilly), John Paul II's concept of human freedom has a distinctively Actonian ring to it: freedom is not the power to do what we like, but the right to do what we ought.

The Pope seems to suggest, between the lines, that the argument over the structural right-ordering of economies and polities is over.

True freedom, the Pope insists, is built on the basic "truth about man," which is that man has a "capacity for transcendence" (p. 80). Moreover, it is precisely this capacity for transcendence—man's ability to grasp the truth of things and to be grasped by that truth in ways that impel us to action—that is the foundation on which societies, cultures, polities, and economies worthy of human beings can be constructed. In short, as Jacques Maritain and others in the great tradition of modern Catholic social thought insisted, the answer to the false humanisms of the modern world is the true humanism that derives from Jewish and Christian understandings about human nature, human community, human history, and human destiny.

The Revolution of 1989 looms large in this encyclical, and the Pope quite rightly insists that this fundamental upheaval was primarily moral and cultural in character: which will, one hopes, give pause to those Western political scientists who are disgorging reams of paper explicating the Revolution as an example of "delayed modernization," or some such. After a few brisk words deprecating the Yalta agreements (do we find here one source of the Pope's evident nervousness about the political will of the West?), John Paul cuts straight to the heart of the matter: the Revolution of 1989 was one in which "the non-violent commitment of people who . . . succeeded time after time in finding effective ways of bearing witness to the truth" (p. 45). A moral and cultural revolution, in other words, preceded and made possible the political revolution that threw off the shackles of "Real Socialism."

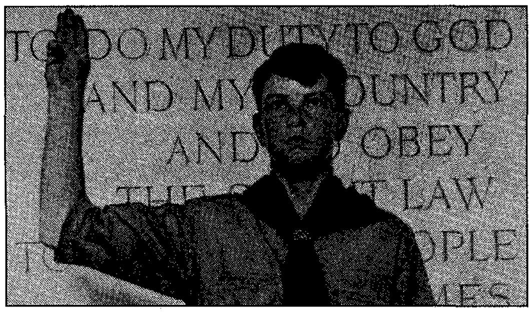
It is in drawing out the implications of that moral and cultural revolution—a revolution of conservation, one could argue, a revolution in which Central and Eastern Europeans opened the path to a more humane future by reappropriating the central political tradition of the West—that John Paul II creatively extends the trajectory of modern Catholic social teaching in *Centesimus Annus*. There is no talk whatsoever of a "Catholic third way" here. The Pope seems to suggest, between the lines, that the argument over the structural right-ordering of economies and polities is over: democracy, and a free economy disciplined by a free political system and a moral-cultural system rooted in the truth about man, are the future. "A society of free work, of enterprise, and of participation" (p. 68) is the kind of society worthy of men and women made in the image and likeness of God. And does that mean that "capitalism is the victorious social system," the Pope asks. Yes, "if by 'capitalism' is meant an economic system which recognizes the fundamental and positive role of business, the market, private property, and the resulting responsibility for the means of production, as well as free human creativity in the economic sector" (pp. 81-82).

Centesimus Annus also identifies the real-world cutting edge of the argument about post-modernity by emphasizing that a society's moral culture is the crucial determinant of whether democracy and a free economy create the social circumstances in which men are free with a freedom that is worthy of man. Freedom, in other words, is never guaranteed. Democratic politics and the free economy are two linked aspects of a never-ending experiment testing man's capacity for self-governance. There is no shame, and there is much wisdom, in acknowledging that this truth (so reminiscent of the teaching of John Courtney Murray, SJ) applies to the established democracies just as it does to the emerging democracies of Central and Eastern Europe, Latin America, and East Asia.

Americans who have dismissed modern Catholic social teaching as an irrelevant irritant because of the Church's assumed allergy to the free economy will have to go back to the intellectual drawing boards in the light of *Centesimus Annus*. So, too, will those brethren *à la gauche* who have tried to position John Paul II as the last hope of socialism with a human face. A free economy disciplined by democratic politics and a moral culture built on the truth about man: that is the authoritative Catholic vision of the right-ordering of society at the end of the twentieth century. The Catholic "answer" to the failures of Marxism and the excesses of Manchesterian liberalism is in—and the answer is democratic capitalism, rightly understood. □

Mad about the Boys

THE ACLU'S NEXT TARGET



The ACLU doesn't much mind boys trying to be helpful, friendly, cheerful, clean, or even brave—but *reverent*? Call in the thought police.

MIDGE DECTER

A TEN-YEAR-OLD American boy is on the whole a highly protected person. True, if he is located in a big-city ghetto nowadays, he must literally live in fear of random bullets, and there are the seemingly ubiquitous drug dealers lying in wait to exploit him. But even a ghetto child is not likely to meet many of the dangers that were once a routine fixture of life in America and that remain so to this day in all too many countries of the world: diphtheria, for instance, or scarlet fever, smallpox, typhoid, typhus, tuberculosis, child labor, and starvation—to name far from all. And if he is a child of the American middle class, he is apt to be positively cosseted: heaped with entertainments and playthings, medically attended to at all times, and expected to spend long and lingering years in the process of attaining independence.

In any case, whether this boy is growing up among the unbelievably lucky or the not so lucky, American society is positively ablaze with projects and undertakings to keep him from moral harm. He must be shielded, say some, from both literary and televised spectacles of violence. He must be kept safe, say others, from any advertised attempts to lure him into smoking cigarettes or drinking whisky. To these two can be added a list of shifting stylish others, like tolerating air pollutants, cultivating a taste for "empty calories," caffeine, sugar, cholesterol. Now, of course, he must also be introduced early and urgently to the techniques of safe sex. And since as an American child he is primarily to be seen as a creature of social forces, those who undertake on his behalf repose little hope in mere campaigns of persuasion but find it advisable instead to invoke the sanctions provided by legislatures and courts.

Ambitious as they are, however, none of these efforts to divert him from the course of bad mental and physical habits can compare in reach to those that would shield him from any untoward love of God and country. Both of those malign affections have been banished from his school, where—to cite only one of the more colorful examples—the upcoming five-hundredth anniversary of the discovery of America is to be spoken of as the celebration of a crime, and where God may not be spoken of at all.

Still, the danger to him from flag and deity has not been completely overcome. There are yet more battles to be waged on his all too innocent and vulnerable behalf. For there are the Boy Scouts. According to *U.S. News & World Report* (January 14, 1991), about half the boys in the United States between the ages of seven and ten join the Cub Scouts, and about 20 per cent of them remain on, or hook up, with the Boy Scouts proper (ages 11 to 18). As everyone knows, in addition to declaring his aspiration to be trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean, and reverent, a Boy Scout must take an oath, on his honor, "to do my best to do my duty to God and my country." How could such a potentially corrupting influence on the young remain without legal challenge? What is worse, the Boy Scouts of America do not regard either their admonitions or their oath as representing merely the symbols of an arcane tradition: unchastened, they continue to believe the stuff.

To the Barricades

HAPPILY, there are a few staunch parents on the *qui-vive* for their sons' welfare, and, always at the ready to assist them, the American Civil Liberties Union. Indeed, since the 1960s, the ACLU has engaged part of its considerable legal talent in championing the rights of children against such forms of tyranny as dress codes in school and, latterly, inspections for guns and knives at the school door. Naturally, it would not stand idly by with so rich a target as the Boy Scouts of America.

First, not surprisingly, came the lawsuit—which commenced in 1980 and was only the other week decided, no doubt temporarily, in the Scouts' favor in Los Angeles County Superior Court—over excluding homosexuals from membership and especially scoutmastership.

More recently, and in some sense more significantly, the Scouts have been charged in various places with religious discrimination against athe-

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Mrs. Decter is the author of Liberal Parents, Radical Children.

ists. In Chicago, for instance, eight-year-old Mark Welsh has brought suit to set aside the requirement for a "declaration of religious principles." In Anaheim Hills, California, the ACLU has agreed to represent nine-year-old twin brothers, William and Michael Randall, who were asked to leave their Cub Scout pack because they refused to invoke God. It is difficult not to suppose in both these cases that the vigilance of the parents for the mental safety of their children was somehow pressed into strengthening the children's own conviction, for while the Scouts require the mention of God's name, they have come to define Him so loosely that a little boy would have to reach really deeply inside himself to find Him absent. James Randall sent his boys to the Scouts so that they could have fun and go camping, and he could not see, he said, why they should be excluded because of a mere matter of principle. On the other hand, Mark Welsh's daddy knows a thing or two about matters of principle himself: declaring himself a conscientious objector as a potential Vietnam draftee in 1970, he carried all the way to the Supreme Court, and won, his claim that one could conscientiously object to the draft on ethical as well as religious grounds. (If the Selective Service and the U.S. Army could be bent to his determination, the Scouts are clearly in for trouble.)

More serious than these challenges may be the one issued by the United Way of DeKalb County, Illinois, for, as is so often the case with campaigns by the Left against institutions and traditions it does not like, this one is about money. The DeKalb chapter of the United Way denied funding to the local Boy Scouts council on grounds of discrimination. Nationwide, contributions from the United Way account for something like 25 per cent of the Scouts' budget. For its part, the national office of the United Way will neither endorse nor repudiate the action of the DeKalb chapter until it is instructed one way or the other by a federal court. No doubt the ACLU will again be on hand to assist the process of clarification.

So far the Scouts have succeeded in holding their ground with the argument that they are a private organization and hence are entitled to define the requirements for membership. The ACLU maintains that they are not private, since they receive what are in effect public funds from the United Way and often meet in public-school buildings, an argument that might or might not apply—it will be interesting one day to find out—to Afro-American clubs or women's groups. Still, judging from the success in recent years of civil rights over civil liberties, America's boys may yet be saved from the designs of the Boy Scouts upon their already much restrictedly immortal souls.

When that happens we may heave a sigh of relief for a 12-year-old boy in Oakland, California, who on May 10, in order to earn respect from his friends on the street, pulled a gun on a 29-year-old acquaintance and shot him dead in cold blood. It does not seem likely that this boy will have much of a future. But at least he may be saved from anyone wishing to add to the oppressions and injustices of his life by forcing him to speak of his duty to God and his country. ☐

MAKING THE LIBERAL PLANTATION PAY

THE KENNEDYS' SWEETHEART DEAL

PETER SCHWEIZER

ABOVE the Federal Center Southwest Metro station in Washington, D.C., is a prime piece of real estate belonging to America's most famous political family, the Kennedys. The property has proved to be both a highly profitable investment and an instructive example of how Washington really works.

In 1978 Senator Edward Kennedy took up the cudgels in Congress on behalf of home rule for the District of Columbia. He pressed for greater autonomy for the city government (since then, he has sponsored legislation for D.C. statehood), and he was a vocal supporter of the new mayor, Marion Barry. Kennedy voted for, among other things, more federal subsidies for public housing in the city, and the outright transfer of millions of dollars of federal property to the D.C. Redevelopment Land Agency (RLA).

None of this is out of character for Senator Kennedy. But it is at least interesting that the property mentioned above, which the Kennedys acquired in 1981, was purchased from the RLA in what one Washington lawyer calls "a real sweetheart deal."

In the late 1970s an estimated $100 million in federal property was transferred to the D.C. government. The RLA was put in charge of selling the transferred property, as well as other tracts already owned by the city. The parcel sold to the Kennedys consisted of an entire city block between Third and Fourth Streets and D and Virginia Avenues, SW.

According to real-estate documents, the Kennedy deal involved two limited partnerships, Fourth and D Street Partners and WDC Associates. WDC Associates consists of the children of Joseph P. Kennedy, Fourth and D Street Partners of his grandchildren. Both have the same managing partner—Joseph P. Kennedy Enterprises Inc., which is run "for the benefit of the direct lineal descendants of Joseph P. Kennedy." Signing the 1981 documents for JPK Enterprises Inc. was R. Sargent Shriver.

The Kennedys did not have to compete for the property, because it was never put up for public bidding. Public bidding was not required under Chapter 7 § 5-701 of the D.C. Code, under which the property was ostensibly offered. But Chapter 7 § 5-701 does not apply to city-owned property at all: it applies to privately held property that has been condemned. The sale was made possible through a federally funded program called Southwest Urban Renewal Area Project C, which received "substantial aid and as-

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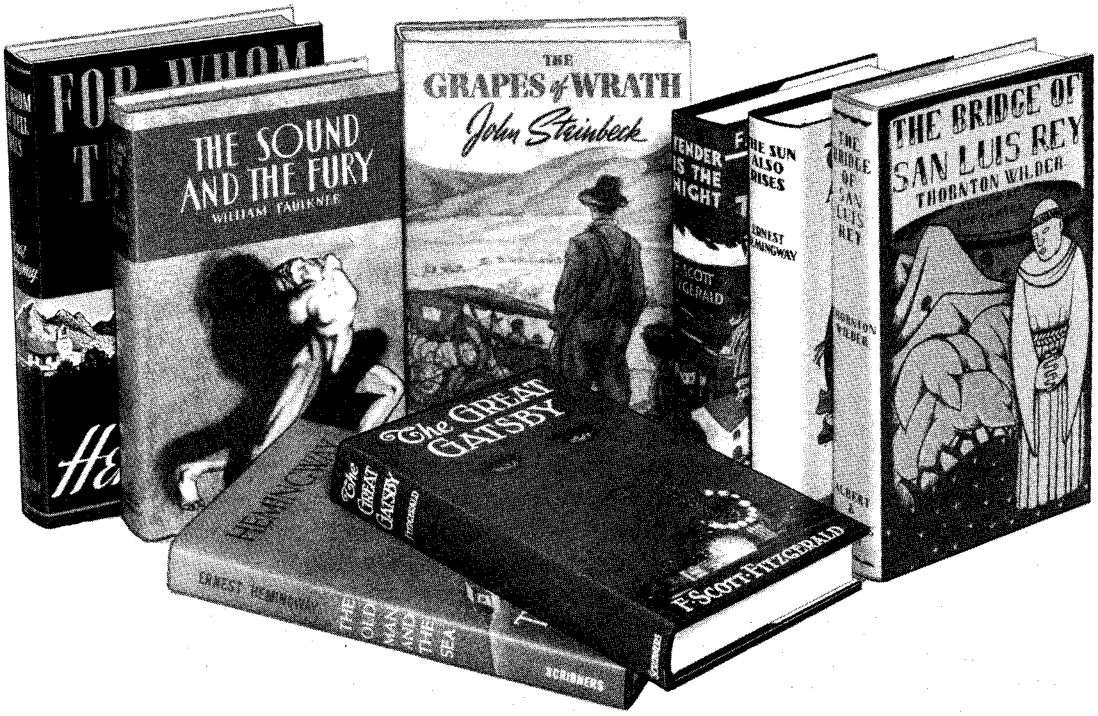
Mr. Schweizer is a Washington-area writer.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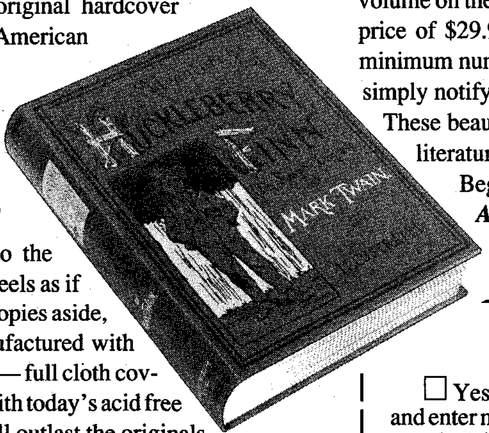
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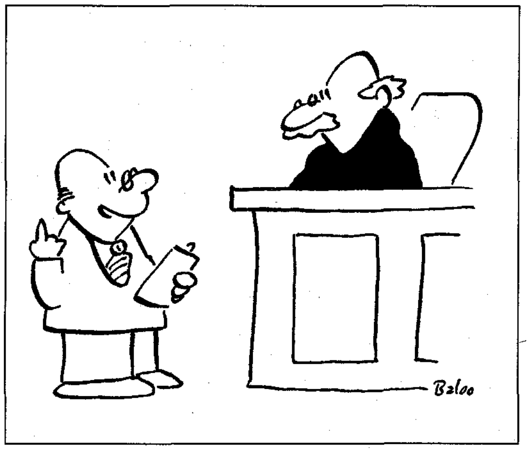
sistance" from the Federal Government, according to real-estate records.

The Kennedys paid a mere $3 million for the property and a warehouse located on it, or approximately $29 per square foot. A look at other properties in the immediate vicinity illustrates how low that price was. In 1980 a vacant lot one block to the east was sold by the RLA for $42 per square foot. In 1981 two properties across the street from the warehouse were renting for between $35 and $40 per square foot. Commercial appraisers contacted by the author confirmed that the sale price was extremely low. Two separate appraisers concluded that it should have gone for double the actual purchase price—$6 to $7 million. They point out that being on top of a Metro station greatly increases the value of commercial property. It guarantees heavy foot traffic for businesses, and makes the property highly desirable to the Federal Government, Washington's predominant employer.

Mutual Benefit

THE SALE took place at a time when the D.C. government was financially strapped, and having a difficult time funding social programs and other commitments. It owed HUD $80 million that it could not pay. Mayor Barry was lobbying for more federal funds to solve these problems, and Senator Kennedy was sympathetic.

One reason adduced at the time for the city's financial trouble was questionable real-estate transactions by the RLA. The General Accounting Office (GAO) was openly critical of the RLA in 1982, charging that city property (much of it a gift from the Federal Government) was being sold for bargain-basement prices, often to political friends of the mayor. In March of that year, a GAO report criticized the RLA for failing to have clear criteria for determining "why one developer is selected over another." Some transactions, said the report, "give the appearance of a loosely run activity, and, as a result, much controversy exists concerning the sale of urban-renewal property, sales prices, and selection of developers." Nathan Landow, for example, a prominent Democratic Party fundraiser, paid less than one-third the market price for a piece of downtown real estate he purchased from the RLA in early 1982.



"True, my client did wrong—but at least he avoided the appearance of wrongdoing."

The extremely low purchase price was not the only "sweet" element of the Kennedy deal. Thanks to the personal intervention of Marion Barry, the Kennedys avoided stringent minority-ownership requirements. The RLA had an unwritten rule that required development teams purchasing city property to be at least one-quarter minority-owned. According to an RLA official, that unwritten rule was "strictly enforced." Indeed, a search of other commercial-real-estate transactions involving the RLA reveals *no other instance in which such a waiver was made.* Barry intervened to waive the requirement for the Kennedys because, according to the *Washington Post,* he "strongly supported" the Kennedy purchase.

Mayor Barry was not the only one wanting to do business with the Kennedys. They landed a multi-million-dollar lease from the best tenant possible—the Federal Government, specifically the Small Business Administration.

But the deal almost fell through. According to a senior official at the General Services Administration (GSA), which reviews such transactions, the initial lease submitted in the fall of 1989 was rejected when it became clear that Senator Kennedy was an "interested party." Federal regulations prohibit commercial transactions between elected federal officials and the Federal Government. According to the GSA official, the paperwork was "reworked" by Kennedy family lawyers when the problem emerged. They submitted a new proposal several weeks later, adding another layer of partnership; because Senator Kennedy was now a beneficiary of a beneficiary of the deal, rather than a direct beneficiary, his name no longer needed to appear on the documents, and the lease was signed.

The Kennedys are one of the wealthiest families in the country, and one of the politically most powerful. It would be wrong to suggest any connection between their wealth and their influence, or indeed vice versa. □

HEALTH OF NATIONS

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CHARLES D. BAKER

THE DEBATE over the $600-billion American health-care system is being played again, *crescendo,* set off this time by the call of *The Journal of the American Medical Association* for radical reform. There is a reason why this debate has continued for over twenty years without any sign of being resolved. The reason is that perverse incentives for uncontrolled spending and the misallocation of resources are built right into the existing system.

Who, after all, *really* wants to cut back the cost of health care from its

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Mr. Baker is Undersecretary for Health in Massachusetts.

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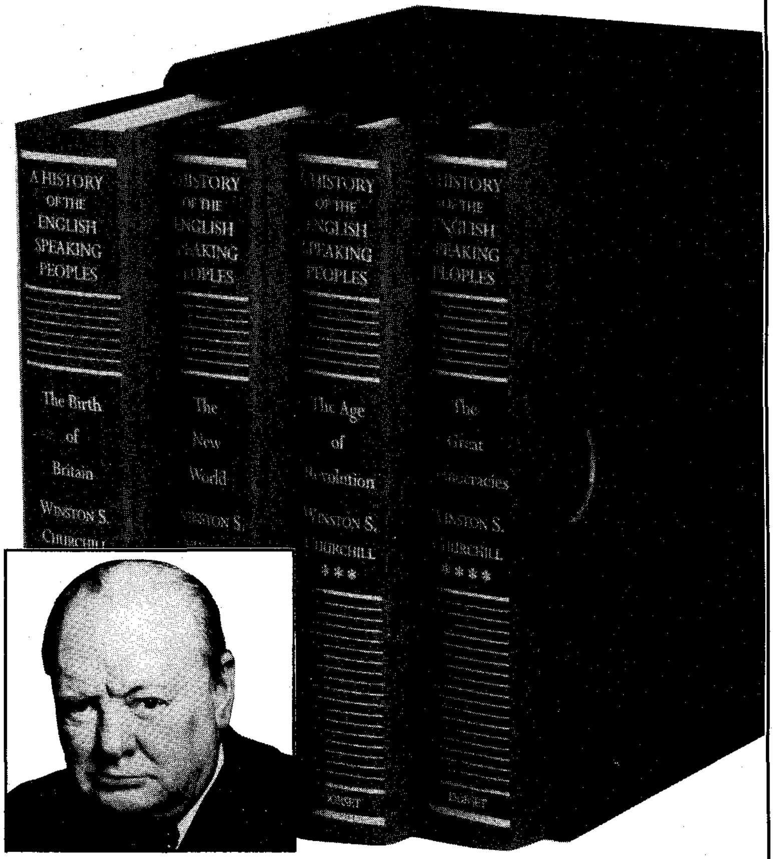

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current 12 per cent of GNP to something more like 9 or 10 per cent?

Physicians? We have about 250 physicians for every hundred thousand people in this country—up 41 per cent since 1970. The Federal Government has invested hundreds of millions of dollars over the past thirty years to increase our physician pool. Unfortunately, the more physicians we have, the more medicine must be practiced for each of them to make money. So are they going to lead the charge for "less medicine," which means, in effect, fewer doctors doing fewer things to fewer patients? I doubt it.

How about nurses? Probably not. The number of nurses per capita is up over 75 per cent since 1970, and although the work is arduous, few who have undergone the training are likely to want to give it up.

Hospitals? Doubtful. For historical reasons they make ends meet by getting additional funding, not by cutting costs.

Health-insurance companies? Sorry. They get paid based on how much activity takes place under their administration and how big is the portfolio they oversee. They've never been much help on cost control.

HMOs? Perhaps. They've had an impact in the places where they operate, but their total enrollment represents less than half of the private health-insurance market, and they're still playing on the margins.

Consumers? Most consumers think things are just fine, thank you. They get all the health care money can buy once they're inside the door, and someone else is paying for most of it. Many employees don't "pay" anything for their health-care coverage. The rest pay small amounts and complain about it when they do. The elderly have Medicare, which in many cases is more generous than most private plans, and many of the poor rely on first-dollar coverage from Medicaid.

Corporations? There are a number of company CEOs, Lee Iacocca of Chrysler, to name one, who have discovered how much their health-care plans are costing their companies. But most are still a long way from coming to grips with the size and significance of this issue. Ironically, some of those who *are* trying to address the problem, like Iacocca, advocate a publicly financed solution, something they wouldn't dream of foisting on their own industries.

The bottom line? There are a large number of powerful, well-educated people in this country who benefit from the high cost of health care. In addition, the cost of their benefits is being paid for, in large part, by the Federal Government by way of corporate benefit tax deductions, personal tax credits, and Medicare and Medicaid. This makes it extremely difficult to put together a coalition that is committed to curtailing or reforming these benefits. With the sole exception of the catastrophic-illness legislation, the discussion of health care in Washington has been about *expanding* benefits, not scaling them back.

"If it's any consolation, there are twice as many lawyers here as there are doctors."

Case Study

LET'S TAKE a closer look at how hospital costs have risen. Since 1970, the Consumer Price Index has risen by about 190 per cent. Physician fees have risen by about 260 per cent, dentist fees by about 215 per cent, drugs by about 175 per cent, and total medical services by about 290 per cent. Why is the medical-services number so high? Simple. The price of a hospital room has increased by 425 per cent over that same period.

During a time in which advances in communication, transportation, and distribution systems have made the world a much smaller place, the number of hospitals and the number of acute-care beds has increased dramatically. Even now, closing a hospital is at least as hard as siting a prison or building a solid-waste disposal facility.

But none of this should be terribly surprising. This industry grew up around a payment system that encouraged cost escalation. Until very recently, most of the payment arrangements in health care were based on historical cost-plus pricing and fee-for-service reimbursement. This meant two things: 1) hospitals have been driven by an ever-growing need to increase costs; and 2) physicians have been paid to "do something."

For hospitals, slowing down the growth of costs, or reducing costs, has meant reducing revenues, quite possibly for years to come, since past levels of cost affect future reimbursement rates. Facilities were encouraged to solve their financial problems not by minimizing costs but by maximizing reimbursements. For physicians, choosing to do nothing meant not being paid for services rendered, making fee-for-service the medical equivalent of piecework payments. In addition, physicians often order more tests than they might otherwise, because of the public's increasing propensity to sue for malpractice.

By combining these reimbursement and legal systems with generous tax and entitlement systems, we made the consumer, as well as the provider, virtually impervious to any cost/benefit pressures. This mentality cannot be dismantled overnight.

Making a Start

ANY LONG-TERM solution to the high cost of health care in this country must deal with three issues: 1) the cost escalation incentives generated and maintained by the cost-plus and fee-for-service reimbursement systems; 2) the invisibility and generosity of tax-deductible corporate health-care benefits, and the Medicare and Medicaid systems; and 3) federal policies dedicated to increasing the supply of health care, and thus the demand for it.

So far, the only reform plan that addresses these issues is the one put forth by the Heritage Foundation. This plan would make health insur-

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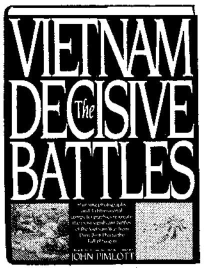
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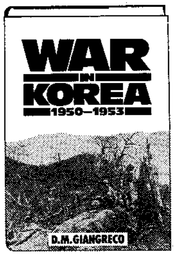
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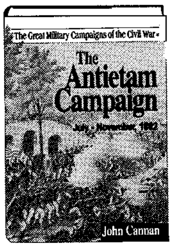
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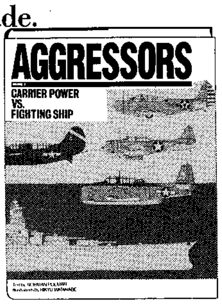
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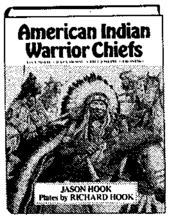
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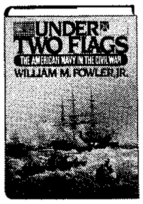
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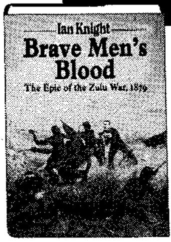
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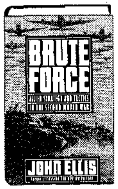
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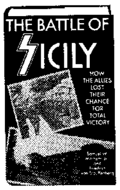
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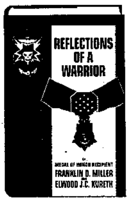
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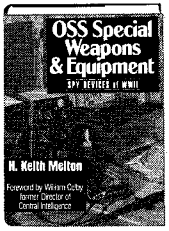
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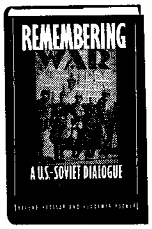
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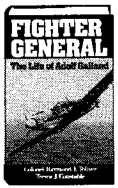
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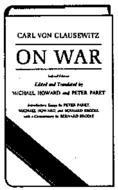
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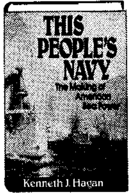
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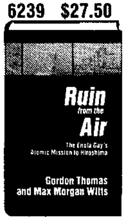
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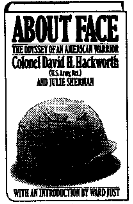
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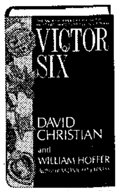
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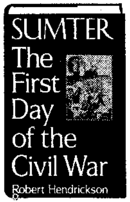
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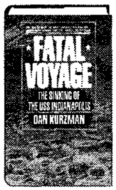
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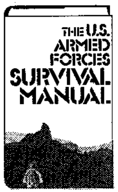
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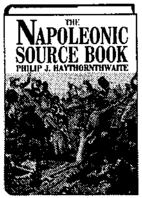
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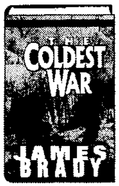
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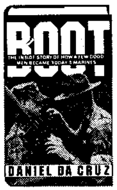
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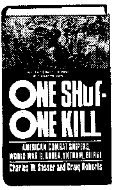
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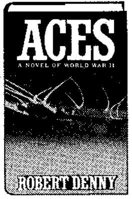
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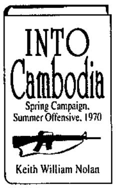
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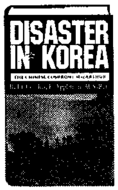
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ance compulsory, but would put the choice of which plan to purchase in the hands of each household, using federal tax credits to soften the impact of the outlay. Another version that has been suggested is to treat corporate health benefits as taxable income.

Whichever version was chosen, the result would be to put the cost of health care, for the first time in fifty years, right in front of the consumer, and might force some hard choices to be made. For example, it might encourage people to pay more attention to hospital-specific pricing, which remains one of life's great mysteries. In Massachusetts, the Health Data Consortium has been publishing a hospital pricing guide for several years, and it reveals some amazing fluctuations. Even simple procedures can show price variations as high as 3,000 per cent from one facility to the next. How can this be possible?

One plan, however, that does exactly the opposite of what we ought to be doing is the one that would simply mandate corporate health benefits. "Let business pay for it" has a nice political ring, but if we really want to solve the crisis created by the high cost of health care, we've got to move away from the Michael Dukakis/Ted Kennedy approach of creating a new set of entitlements and dumping them onto an existing system that's already a mess. We've got to begin by cleaning up the mess.

This is not going to be easy. We know far more about what's wrong with the system than we do about how to fix it. Some people say that half of what we spend on health care is spent on 5 per cent of the population during the last six months of their lives, and if, for example, we simply stop performing triple-bypass surgeries on people over seventy, we can save a lot of money. Others say we need to pay more attention to physician practice patterns, and that developing uniform service-delivery criteria will cut the price of health care by 25 per cent. While there's something to be said for each of these reforms, the solution is probably not that simple.

Mostly, I think we need to stop looking for one-shot solutions and start being honest with each other, as consumers and providers, about how much our health-care system costs and why it's so expensive. If we can all acknowledge how it got this way and who benefits from the current situation, we can begin to rein in this high-growth industry. If we don't, health-care costs could approach 15 per cent of GNP by the mid 1990s. That would be bad medicine for all of us. □

CONSERVATIVE QUESTIONS

NEW PARADIGM OR OLD PARADOX?

ARAM BAKSHIAN JR.

HISTORY, according to an old Austrian friend of mine who saw more than one New World Order come and go, is mainly a matter of people rediscovering the obvious by tripping over it. This is certainly true of the current conservative debate over the post-Reagan future. The five points of the "New Paradigm" defined by White House aide James Pinkerton [*NR*, Jan. 28] are a case in point. For those whose memories go back to the Nixon years and before, the points are as much a case of *déjà vu* as a glimpse into the future, a reprise of some of the oldest—and worthiest—conservative and Republican principles: "market forces," "individual choice," "empowerment" (a trendy new word for more individual opportunities for self-betterment), "decentralization," and "what works" (statism has failed; conservatism works; ergo, it should be applied).

In short, there is nothing particularly new about the Pinkerton Paradigm. Most conservative and Republican politicians have *espoused* these points for the better part of this century, and their roots go back much further. Their *application* has been another matter, limited, as it has been, by political reality: a virtual Democratic monopoly on control of the Congress for most of the past sixty years. More recently, while the Republicans have won five out of six presidential elections since 1968, the Democrats have kept control of the House of Representatives 12 times in a row, the Senate nine out of 12 times.

The public's electoral ambivalence when it comes to choosing executives and legislators was explained, perhaps unwittingly, by Mr. Pinkerton when he wrote that the most important political lesson of our time is: "First, the American people do not like taxes. Second, they *do* want a kinder, gentler America."

This is tantamount to saying that Americans want to lose weight while pigging out on Hostess Twinkies. Achieving what the voters want when their desires are contradictory is always tricky work. A Hollywood screenwriter of the 1930s once defined a successful story line as one that was "new but familiar, controversial but inoffensive, salacious but moralistic, and simple-minded but highbrow." That is not a bad definition of Reaganism in its diluted, applied form from 1981 to 1989. It was a lot more amorphous than the textbook truisms it invoked, but about as sharply defined as the public was willing to accept.

More for Less

HAS anything changed? Today's voters, if we are to take Mr. Pinkerton at his word (and I am inclined to do so), want an America that is stingy but generous, that is secure but reaps the benefits of risk taking, and that makes them feel both comfortable and virtuous on the cheap. In short, unless and until they face a forced choice, most Americans would like a government that gives them everything they want, for less than they are currently shelling out in taxes.

Up to a point, this is a tribute to the good sense of the public. Government

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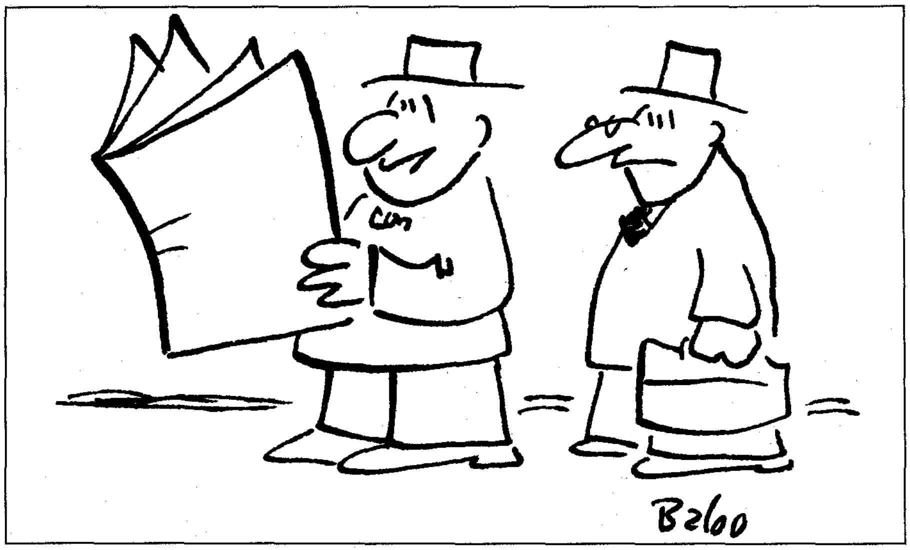
Mr. Bakshian, an aide to Presidents Nixon, Ford, and Reagan, is the author of two books on presidential politics.



"Uh-oh—Ted Turner just bought up the rights to the Reagan Administration."

is spendthrift. If our taxes are not overly high compared to those in most other industrial democracies, the fact remains that billions—perhaps as much as 25 per cent of tax revenues—are either wasted through inefficiency, or allotted to goals that are undesirable, unnecessary, or unattainable.

Unfortunately, the strength of statism's appeal is greater in its parts than in its whole; the war for pork-barrel spending and the welfare state has been won in detail, vote by vote, year by year in the Congress, with little or no relation to the big budget picture laboriously compounded in the Oval Office and the OMB. Having served as an aide to George Bush's three Republican predecessors, I was a reluctant eyewitness to this phenomenon, unchanging regardless of the fluctuations in public support for Messrs. Nixon, Ford, and Reagan.

In the end, focused special interests almost always triumphed over unfocused public sentiment on the spending side, whether the special interest in question was the welfare lobby, the defense industry, environmentalists, or agribusiness. There was plenty of blame to go around, but the heart of the problem lay not in too many pragmatists on the White House staff, but in too few conservative votes in the Congress.

To the extent that this public ambivalence continues—and, human nature being human nature, no drastic change is likely any century soon—the future of American conservatism will rest not on the application of a new paradigm, but on the delicate manipulation of an ancient paradox: the duality of human nature.

Forcing the Choice

CONSERVATIVES must force the choice. Keeping down taxes, bolstering traditional values, and promoting economic growth is the one really tangible domestic agenda which, if reclaimed, can lock in the loyalties of a working majority of American voters. Maintaining the Republican position as the party of strength and patriotism (and the Democrats as the party of weakness and self-doubt) is the foreign-policy corollary.

Meanwhile, on the fund-raising fringes of the Right, another old paradox has come into play; the cry of treason among the King's ministers at a time when the King is at the height of his popularity has once again gone up. In 1972, it took the form of the late John Ashbrook's futile candidacy for the Republican nomination. Far from strengthening the conservative hand, Ashbrook's pathetic showing in the New Hampshire primary (Nixon won by a landslide and liberal Republican Pete McCloskey, running as a dove on Vietnam, out-polled Ashbrook 2 to 1) actually *weakened* conservative influence in the White House. In 1980, Ronald Reagan faced a similar challenge from self-proclaimed leaders like Richard Viguerie, who first backed Phil Crane and then John Connally for the GOP nomination. Result: One Connally delegate and a Reagan landslide.

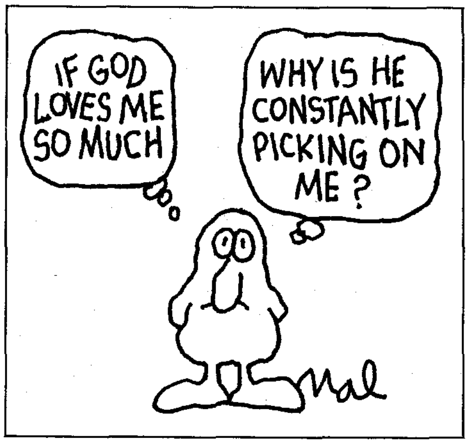
Mr. Pinkerton is correct when he says the conservative movement today is "close to becoming a majority coalition." But he is dead wrong when he characterizes that movement as "combining the power of family-oriented evangelicals and libertarian supply-siders." If that were all the "power" there was in American conservatism it would be a beast with a tail, a snout, and nothing in between. Witness the 1988 GOP primaries: the candidate of the evangelicals (Pat Robertson) and the candidate of the supply-siders (Jack Kemp) were overwhelmed by the legitimist candidate of the Reagan coalition (George Bush, in case you've forgotten).

Again, it comes back to an old paradox. Applied, as opposed to theoretical, conservatism is at least as instinctive as it is intellectual. When it triumphs it is a victory of the visceral over the vaporous, drawing on values and loyalties deeply imbedded in human nature and the American character—so deeply that they almost defy analysis.

The American Left has either rejected these values or fatally underestimated their potency. To the extent that its warped thinking earned the New Deal/Great Society Democratic Party the status of the "Party of Ideas," it sowed the seeds of its own ruin. To the extent that we have profited from this ruin in five of the last six presidential elections, the Republican Party (in tandem with the mainstream conservative movement) has done so as a party of innate values rather than abstract ideas. While each generation must apply them anew in a new context, these values are as old as the Republic, neatly encapsulated by John O'Sullivan as "limited government, prudent finance, an independent citizenry with a stake in the economy, a network of little platoons, the diffusion of God-fearing morality . . . a post-industrial version of the American Republic of self-reliant agricultural small-holders envisioned by the Founding Fathers."

By levering the old political paradox, by forcing the choice away from what the public tells pollsters it would *like* to see (and what liberal demagogues will always promise) and toward what is affordable, attainable, and true to American values, conservatism can secure and expand its White House beachhead. But only if we avoid the fate of the American Left, rendered irrelevant and paralytic by its own paradigm. ☐

help!!!!


IF GOD LOVES ME SO MUCH
WHY IS HE CONSTANTLY PICKING ON ME?
Mal

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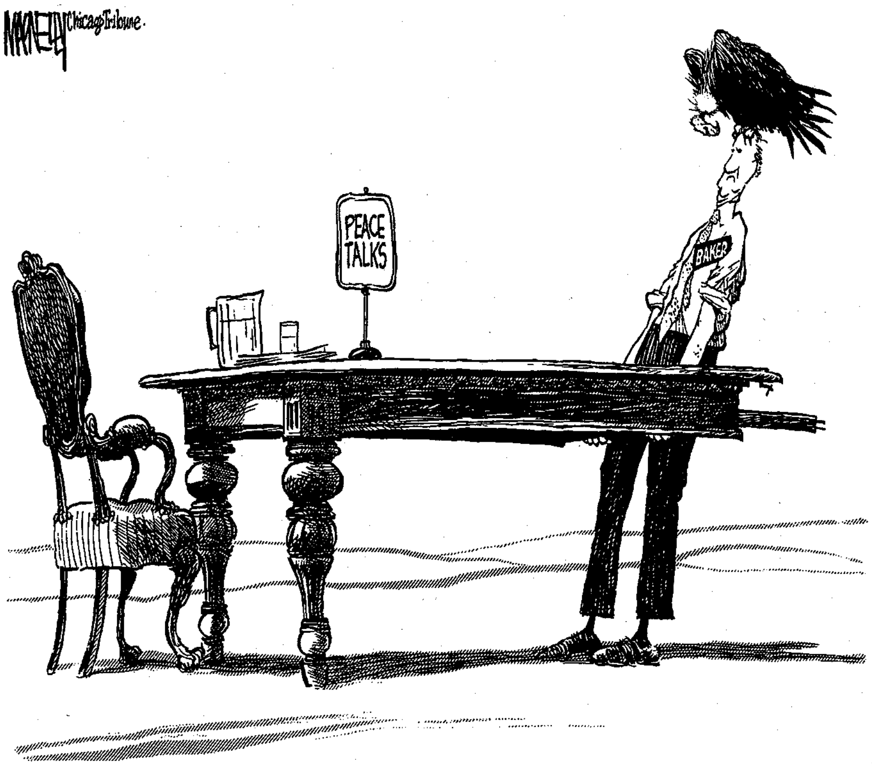
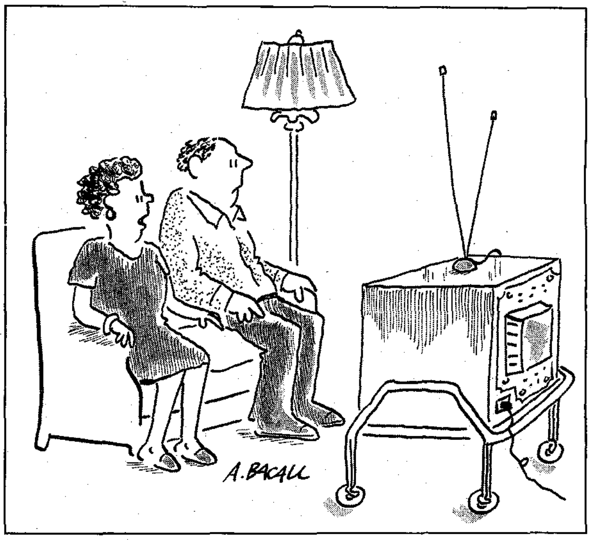

MacNelly Chicago Tribune
PEACE TALKS
BAKER

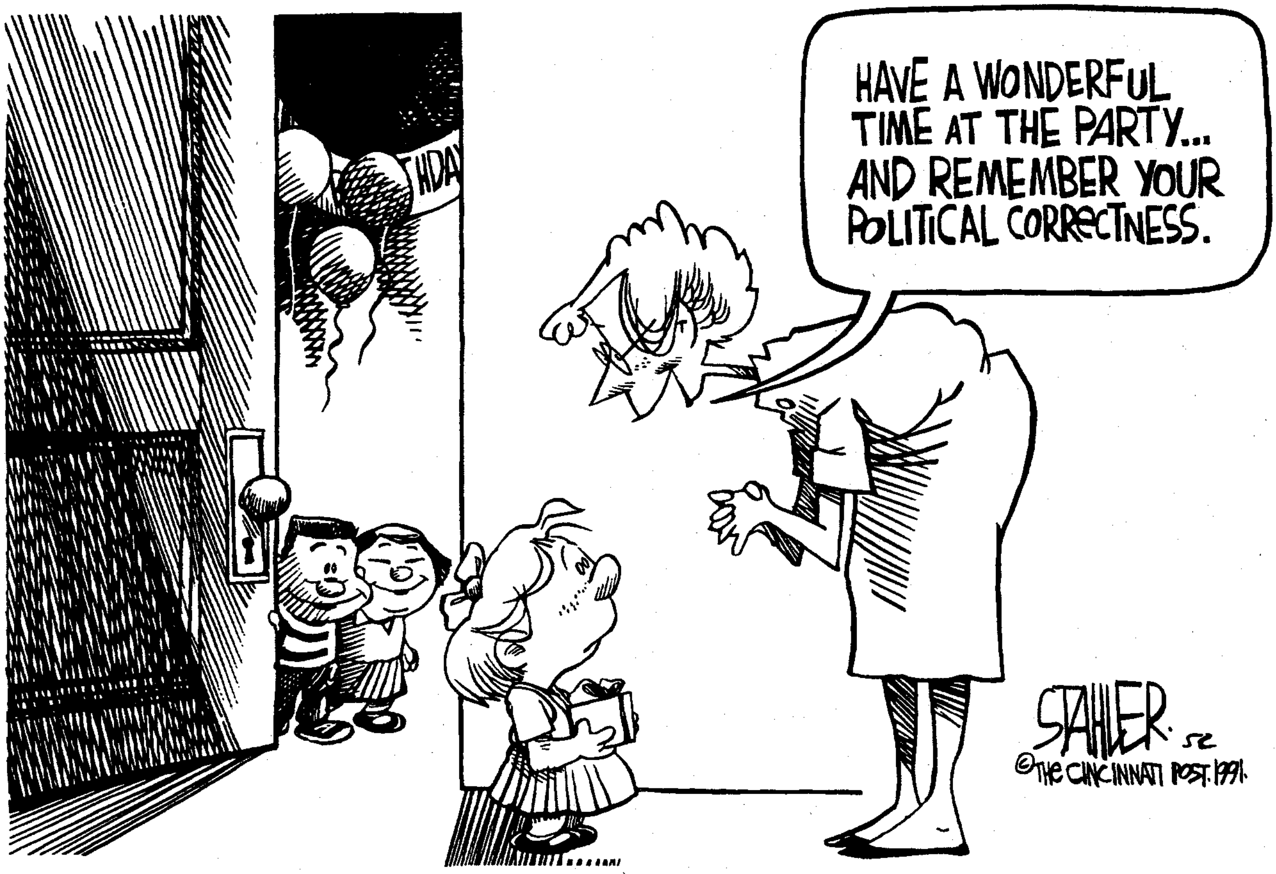
Mr. Cuomo Cancels

Like Frankenstein's creation when it thrust
An awful arm up through the blackened crust
As frightened peasants whispered, "It's alive!"
The governor was scheduled to arrive
At public halls, where garlic had been hung
From door and window to protect the young.

W. H. VON DREELE



"Oh my, doesn't that anchorperson look well informed tonight!"


HDAY
HAVE A WONDERFUL TIME AT THE PARTY... AND REMEMBER YOUR POLITICAL CORRECTNESS.
STAHLER
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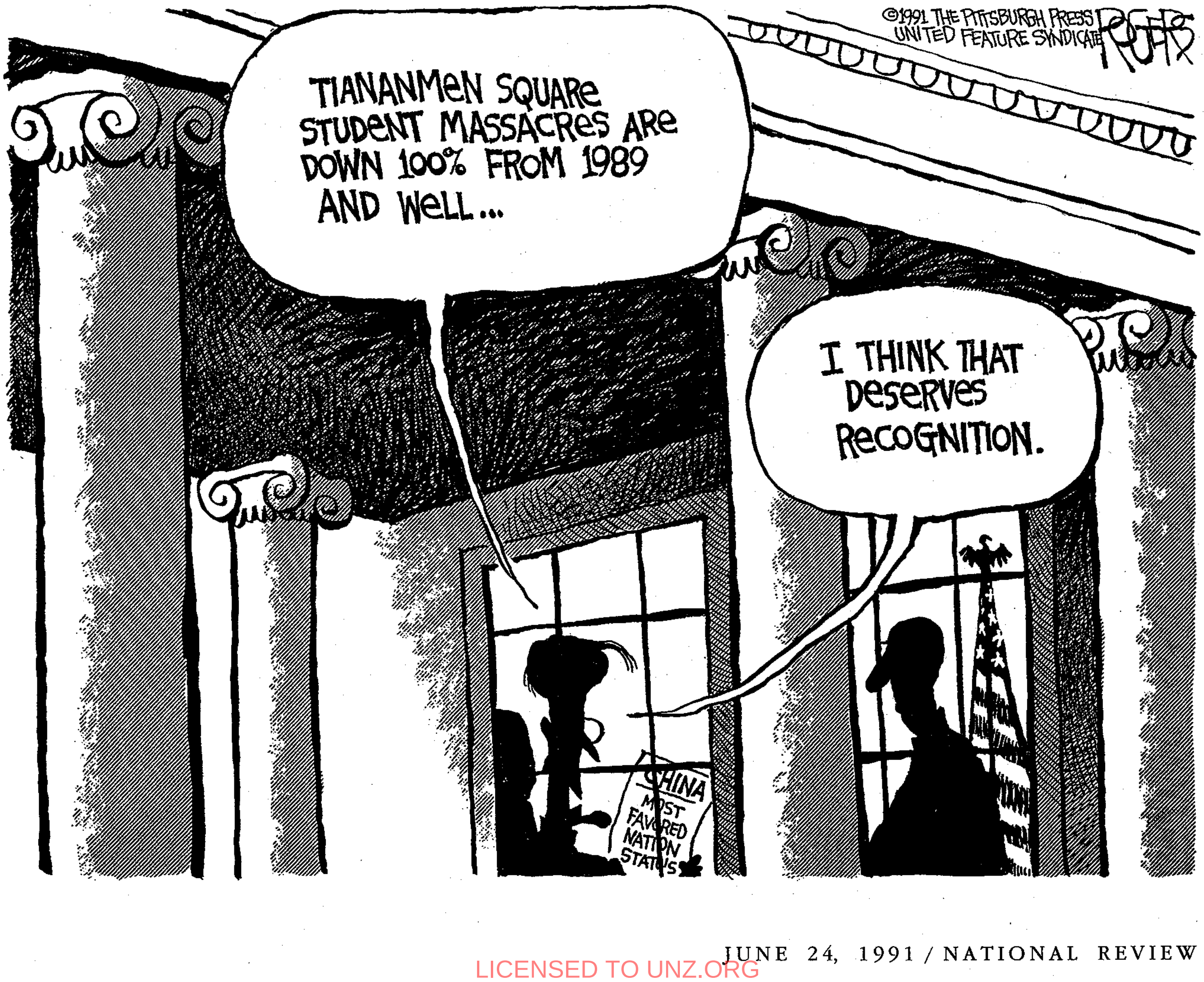
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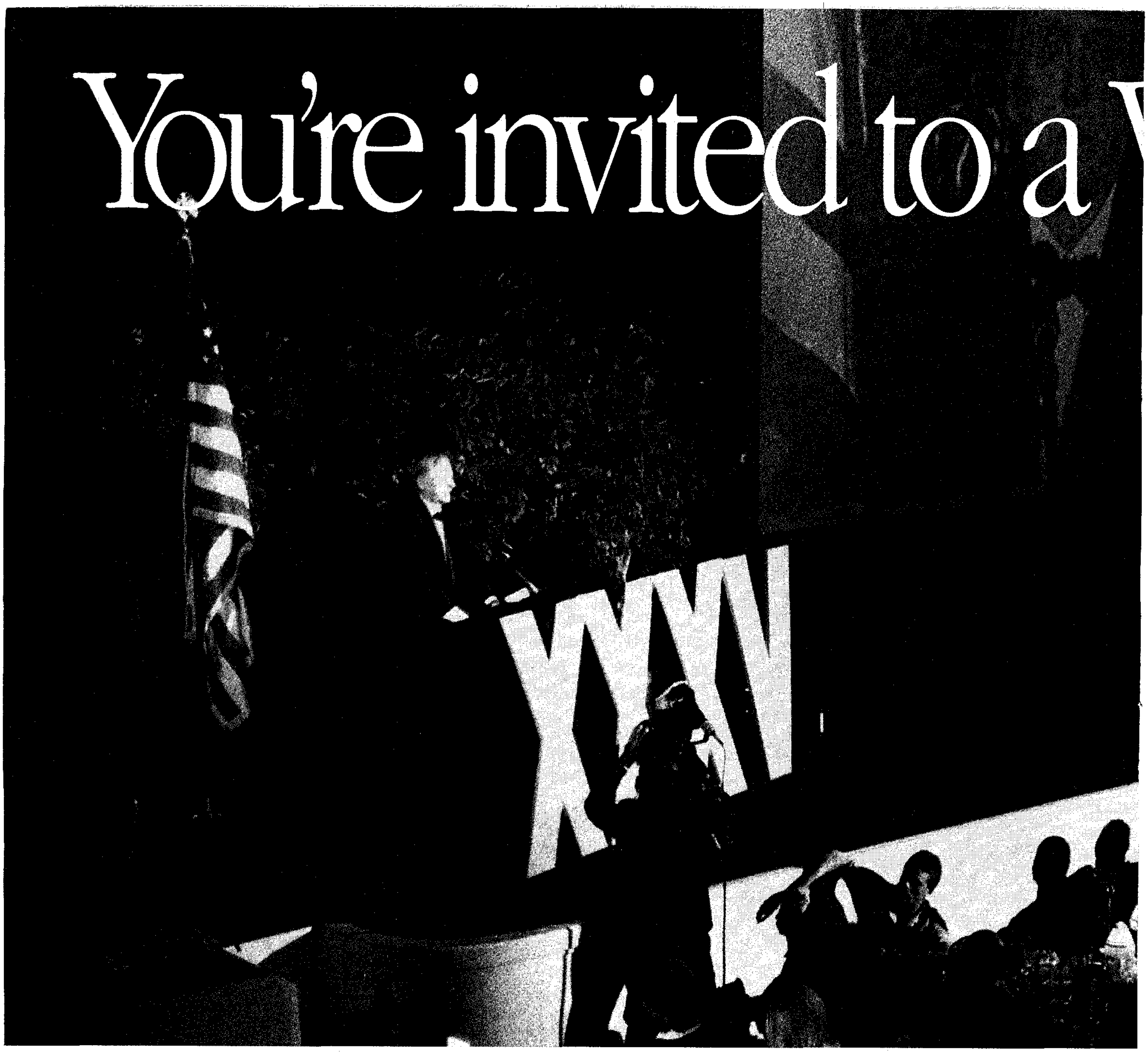

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Best of all, you can see it all as often a you want (not to mention inviting your family and friends in for a party). All in full color, sh by professional cameramen who roamed through the glorious Waldorf Astoria's ballroo catching the action just as it happened — it's

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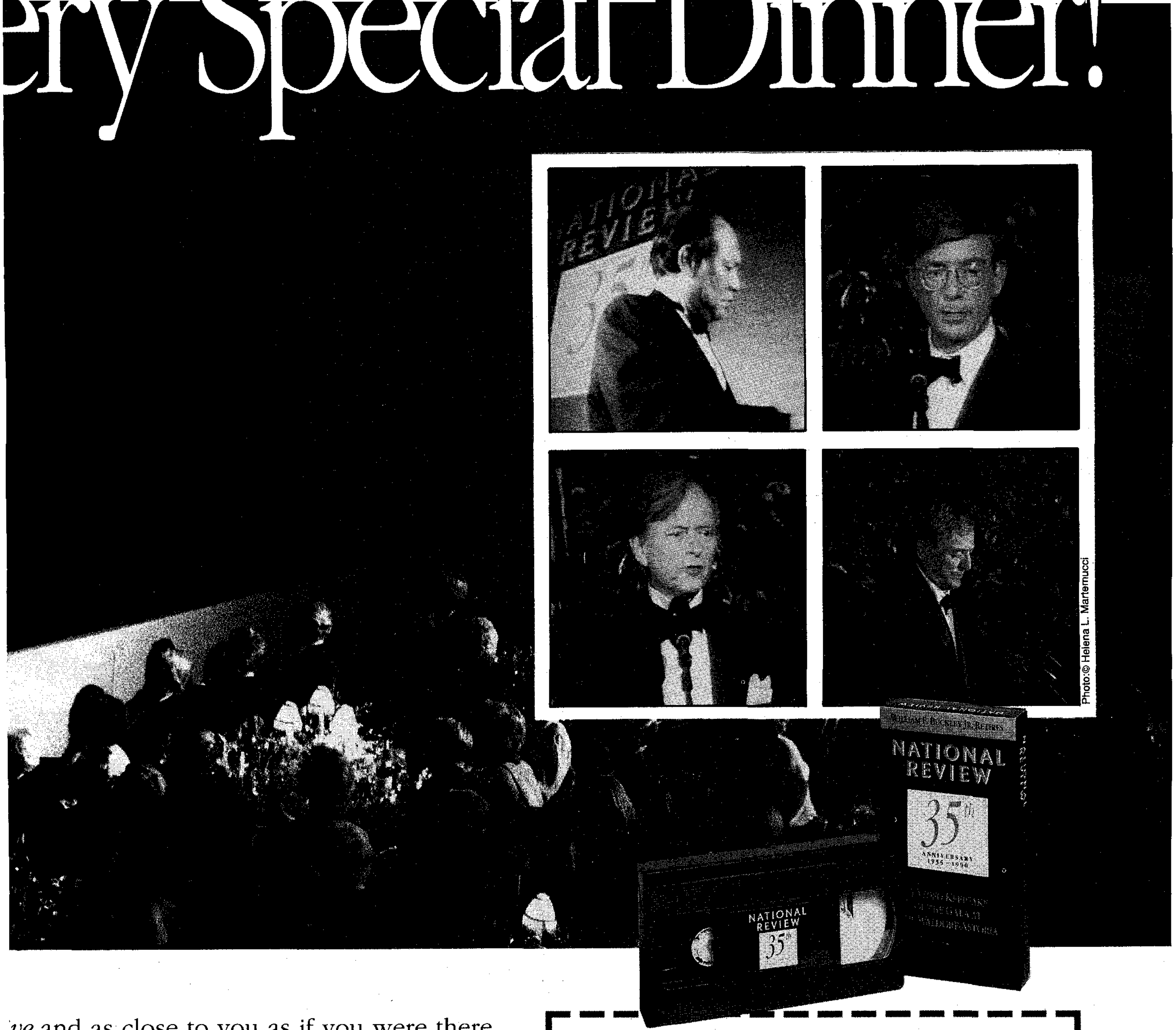

Photo:© Helena L. Martemucci

ve and as close to you as if you were there ourself at the next table. Bill Buckley and thers supply suitable narration, and you won't iiss seeing any of the notables as the camera weeps through the crowd.

✣

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BOOKS, ARTS & MANNERS

The Wealth of Notions

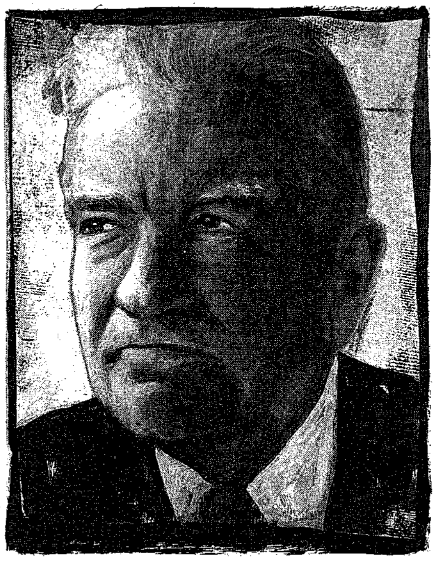
JOSEPH SOBRAN

PAUL JOHNSON is spreading himself thick. He has already written two surveys of modern intellectual life; histories of Christianity, the Jews, the English people, and Ireland; biographies of Elizabeth I and Pope John XXIII; and of course *Modern Times*. Some of these are in my opinion wrongheaded books, but all are impressive for sheer breadth of knowledge. Johnson never writes a page without at least a couple of surprising facts.

Now he is apparently reduced to inventing a new subject, *The Birth of the Modern: World Society 1815–1830*. He contends that this underrated period is that during which "the matrix of the modern world was largely formed." To those who doubt this, he says: "It is true that modernity was conceived in the 1780s. But the actual birth, delayed by the long, destructive gestation period formed by the Napoleonic Wars, could begin in full measure only when peace came and the immense new resources in finance, management, science, and technology which were now available could be put to constructive purposes."

The Birth of the Modern: World Society 1815–1830, by Paul Johnson (HarperCollins, 1,095 pp., $35)

This is an ambitious book, to say the least. It runs to a thousand pages of text, plus notes and index. It covers hundreds of topics, from piano sales in Europe to Malay piracy. European and American politics are dealt with in detail; the main narrative is interwoven with dozens of subplots and essays, on Beethoven, landscape art, the semaphore, coach travel, the era of cheap land, the crushing of the American Indian, Islamic fundamentalism, the cotton industry, the Royal Navy, the changing status of the sexes, dueling, scientific advances, Spanish politics, secret societies in Italy, Byron's sex life, the rise of cricket, child prodigies, medical progress and body snatching, Turkish reform, Chinese corruption, the rise of international banking, and dozens of other matters, all more or less related to Johnson's central thesis.


Tim Bower

What emerges from it all is a portrait of the rising middle class in the West, and of the incipient Westernization of the rest of the world. In Europe and America, there was unprecedented prosperity, which raised the condition of ordinary people. Infant mortality fell; birth rates soared; education thrived; the common people acquired new influence and political rights; women gained a measure of independence; the press became a major locus of power. The arts became democratized too: the piano became a household "altar," as Johnson puts it, of the middle-class home, a symbol of the new availability of culture.

Consider the episode of George IV's attempted divorce from his wayward wife, Caroline. When he succeeded to the throne in 1820, they were already so bitterly estranged that he didn't want her to share the royal honors. But when he schemed to get a divorce, he found several unexpected obstacles, among them popular sympathy for her. As early as 1813, Jane Austen had written: "Poor woman, I shall support her as long as I can, because she *is* a Woman, and because I hate her Husband." In 1820, the 14-year-old Elizabeth Barrett wrote: "At this period, when the base & servile aristocracy of our beloved country overwhelm with insults our magnanimous and unfortunate Queen, I cannot restrain my indignation, I cannot control my enthusiasm—my dearest ambition would be to serve her, to serve the glorious Queen of my native isle."

"For the first time in English history," Johnson comments, "an issue had arisen in which the entire country became emotionally involved and everyone felt they had a right to an opinion. In its own way it was an important landmark in the road to democracy and a tribute to the new power of the press which made such national participation possible."

We take participation for granted, but it came as a surprise to George IV. The same thing was happening in France, which saw "the growth of the printing industry and the increase in reading," along with "the growth of a large professional class of writers"—all of which together made possible what Sainte-Beuve would call *la littérature industrielle*, culminating in Alexandre Dumas's famous "fiction factory." Today, public opinion has become almost an artifact of mass production.

Meanwhile, the Western powers were exploring and colonizing the whole world. "Perhaps the most important single aspect of modernity," Johnson writes, "was the way in which, almost imperceptibly, mankind was transforming itself into a single global community, in which different races and civilizations, now touching at all points, simply had to come to terms with each other." Profoundly true, but also a little fuzzy. It wasn't as if everyone was in touch with everyone else; the real common denominator was *Western* contact with all nations. "Coming to terms with

Mr. Sobran, NR's Critic-at-Large, writes a twice-a-week column for Universal Press Syndicate.

each other" generally meant Western dominance, thanks to superior Western science, technology, and, most specifically, weapons. The Sioux and the Maori didn't meet each other; they met Western artillery.

The "single global community" of the twentieth century was effected by a good deal of slaughter in the nineteenth, about which Johnson provides much less detail than he does about other topics, though he tells a fairly chilling amount about the fate of American Indians. He is right to point out that the non-Western world wasn't a set of Edens before the white man came. Western explorers and traders were honestly indignant about the backward and often savage societies they encountered. And the whole experience shouldn't be reduced to indignant homilies about Western imperialism; in the long run Westernization has been accomplished less by raw force than by the power of Western ideas. Still, it's a pity that so inclusive a book should give so little attention to how it all felt on the receiving end. The arrival of the West must have struck most natives as awesome, unimaginable, terrifying, and sometimes wonderful —like an invasion from Mars.

Thanks to the changes that gathered such momentum in this period, the ancient relation between civilization and wilderness has been nearly reversed. Human society used to be a set of unconnected islands in the ocean of nature; now society encloses nature and in some ways threatens its existence. Very little on the earth's surface is impenetrable any more, for better or for worse.

Johnson is certainly right to see the years 1815–1830 as an age of stupendous change, and he has done his best to convey the magnitude of it all, seeking, as he says, "to portray international society in its totality." He is less successful in conveying the sense of chronology he says he aims at; the ratio of digression to narrative is even higher in this book than in his others, though in the nature of the case that was probably unavoidable.

Some of the book's faults are harder to excuse. It is very nearly humorless; and this can be tiresome, not only because so much of Johnson's material seems to invite a smile, but because his tone is monotonous. He says everything with a sort of relentless finality, without doubt, irony, or degrees of knowledge. He addresses all topics with what might be called equicertitude. Nothing amuses him, nothing puzzles him; the meaning of it all seems too pat, too much an expression of Johnson's own attitudes. Surely even recent history has its mysteries. But his narrative lacks drama, not only because the outcome seems foreordained by Johnson's approach, but because he rarely gives the reader a vivid sense of the stakes in any given struggle. There is a dull sense of obviousness about it all.

The Birth of the Modern is nevertheless an impressive feat of learning. Readers who don't want to plow through it from cover to cover may still find it useful as an encyclopedia of its period. It has an index, that indispensable device that can turn any book into a reference book; and this is a case where the parts are better than the whole, as far as reading pleasure is concerned.

Partly this is a tribute to Johnson's immense range of interests; not many readers will share it, though few will begrudge it. But it's also a reflection on his style. He never writes a bad sentence; but he never writes a brilliant one, either. He is intellectually far superior to another great popular historian, Will Durant; but Durant is charming to read at any length.

Worse yet, Johnson's understanding of "modernity" is superficial. He seems unaware of it as a fundamental form of knowing that has caused deep dislocations within the West itself. Though he is called a conservative, his outlook is essentially very Whiggish and progressive, and the category of the "modern" holds no terrors or even problems for him. It is merely associated with such evidently good things as a higher standard of living, improved medical care, and democracy. He isn't troubled by the tension between the modern and the sacred, or by modernity's powerful tendency to reduce everything to the measurable. He lacks empathy with the pre-modern societies whose encounters with the West have not only left them subjugated but have shattered their confidence in their gods.

Modernity is above all a drama in the soul, not a clash between primitive and complex technologies. That drama occurred in the West first. It's a great story, one that *The Birth of the Modern* fails to tell. ☐

Did You Hear the One About . . .

HENRY MITCHELL

IN MANY American circles an ethnic joke is ten degrees more evil than adultery and even worse than smoking; thus one thinks twice before even picking up a book called *Ethnic Humor around the World*, by Christie Davies, professor of sociology at the University of Reading.

A student and scholar of such jokes, with a personal collection going back for years, Mr. Davies gives almost innumerable examples of them, methodically grouped in categories, for one joke differs from another in glory, as one might say.

Ethnic Humor around the World, by Christie Davies (Indiana University Press, 416 pp., $39.95)

As a sociologist the author takes care that few of the jokes are delightful or even shocking. Many of them seem to have lost something in translation or in being reduced to the written word, a thing he alludes to. Still, some are pleasant enough, like the one about speed limits in Belgium:

"A law was proposed to set a speed limit of ninety kilometers on ordinary two-lane roads, retaining the prior absence of any limitations only on the major four-lane highways with limited access and other safety features. But one Walloon member of parliament pointed out that most of these better roads are in Flanders, whose inhabitants would thus enjoy the right to drive faster than French-speaking motorists. Some of the older roads of Wallonia were, therefore, exempted from the speed limit in order to extend the privilege over an equal distance in both sections of the country, even though this would presumably mean a

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Mr. Mitchell is a columnist for the Washington Post.

higher death toll among Walloon drivers and their families."

That's not the way Jay Leno would tell the joke, perhaps, yet it is a significant joke illustrating not only exoteric-esoteric distinctions but also serving as a perfect example of the stupidity joke (a primary category of ethnic jokes). And it kills two birds with one stone, illustrating the stupidity of both Walloons and legislatures.

One might think, if one had not been turned into an expert by reading this book, that ethnic jokes are interchangeable—that is, that one could substitute one minority for another in any ethnic joke—but that is by no means the case.

Stupidity jokes, for example, are generally told about people who are geographically or culturally on the fringe of some main power center, but who are otherwise fairly similar in language, economy, intelligence, etc., to the powerful centrists. Thus the stupid-Walloon joke works well in Belgium, where the minority Walloons

RIGHT BOOKS

■ Economic collapse forces the Soviet leadership to turn away from Communism and embark on a radical economic restructuring. Sound familiar? But the year is 1921. The man stabbing Karl Marx in the back isn't Gorbachev or Yeltsin: it's Lenin himself.

When Paul Craig Roberts's *Alienation and the Soviet Economy* (The Independent Institute, 148 pp., $14.95) first appeared in 1971, the demise of Communism wasn't even a gleam in an ideologue's eye. Yet this analysis of Lenin's writings and speeches demonstrates persuasively that the father of the Soviet state was himself skeptical that Russia could survive pure Communism.

The so-called "war Communism" of 1917 to 1921 is usually dismissed by Western scholars as an ad-hoc wartime improvisation. It was, in fact, the very quintessence of Communism, according to Roberts. The widespread brutality and property confiscations of those early years were designed to obliterate impersonal economic forces—profit, private property, and especially the production and exchange of commodities for money—all of which "alienate" man from the product of his labor and, ultimately, from other men.

By the spring of 1921 even Lenin realized that the attempt to forcibly replace the market with centralized controls had produced an economic catastrophe. A cover-up of sorts ensued: the goal of Soviet economic planning quietly shifted from abolishing the free market to mimicking it. Money was reintroduced and central planning gave way to what Roberts's intellectual mentor, Michael Polanyi, called "polycentricity." Market prices and profits remained off limits, but the planning bureaucracies provided a rudimentary form of economic incentives with their quotas and "success indicators."

The ideological backsliding troubled Lenin deeply. For public consumption he maintained that the retreat was only temporary, made necessary by the overwhelming backwardness (i.e., lack of socialist consciousness) of Russia's peasants. Western scholars overlooked Lenin's reservations, however, and viewed the ersatz, post-1921 Communism as the real thing. (Roberts's documentation of the leftist, anti-capitalist ethos of Western intellectuals may be the most useful contribution of these books.)

Central planning was thus liberated from all but the "appearance" of Marxist ideology. Unfortunately, Soviet economic planning is remarkably free of any process which can reasonably be called planning. Output targets are increased annually without regard to whether the products are needed or wanted; incomes are set without regard to output; prices are rigged to hide rather than reflect underlying inflation. The planning bureaucracy directs most efforts "toward overcoming problems created by its own existence."

The result is the economic, ecological, and moral disaster which is the Soviet Union today. In *Meltdown: Inside the Soviet Economy* (Cato Institute, 152 pp., $9.95) Roberts and Karen LaFollette cull relevant—and often lurid—anecdotes from the pages of *Pravda*, *Izvestia*, *Trud*, and other Soviet publications. It's all here: new roads that collapse and TV sets that implode because of shoddy workmanship; apartment buildings forever unfinished because bonuses are paid according to the number of square feet under construction; office workers asleep at their desks when they're not out food shopping; factory officials charged with uncovering a specified quota of spies and saboteurs; and pollution so intense that life expectancy over the past twenty years has dropped an average of ten years.

Price reform, privatization of state enterprises, and the codification of private property rights are among the prerequisites for economic recovery. But *glasnost* is equally important. Press reports exposing the gangsters, black marketeers, corrupt officials, and other segments of Soviet society that profit from the current economic turmoil make Gorbachev's massive selling job a bit easier. Meanwhile, Gorbachev's advisors report that "after his first, limited attempts at reforming the system [he] has come to accept that the entire system will have to be dismantled if the Soviet Union is to survive as a world power."

Why was Communism's collapse such a great surprise to the West? In his foreword to *Alienation* Aaron Wildavsky suggests that non-recurring factors—a sharp increase in the Communist labor force, better technology (much of it, presumably, imported from the West), and, in the 1970s, foreign borrowing—conspired to obscure and delay the inevitable collapse.

Perhaps more important, most of us in the over-forty generation went through college never having read von Mises or Hayek or Roberts (or, for that matter, Marx). Our opinions were far more likely to have been molded by John Kenneth Galbraith, who as recently as 1984 wrote in *The New Yorker* of the USSR's "great material progress," or Paul Samuelson, whose ubiquitous textbook proclaimed as recently as 1989 that "The Soviet economy is proof that, contrary to what many skeptics had earlier believed, a socialist command economy can function and even thrive."

Although state ownership of the means of production is dead or dying everywhere, in our country the government's power to redistribute the fruits of private enterprise is greater than ever. Milton Friedman has noted that federal, state, and local governments currently spend 40 to 45 per cent of U.S. national income. Roberts's cautionary tales are as relevant for Washington as they are for Moscow.

—ED RUBENSTEIN

are within the same nation as the Flemings, but not at the center of power.

In our country one could devise (and often hears) stupidity jokes about Alaska, Arkansas, the Dakotas, and so on. In New York, no doubt, both California and the District of Columbia would qualify as fringe territories suitable for stupidity jokes.

There are many other categories. In cowardice jokes, the favored targets are nations that have fared poorly in wars or else nations whose agendas have set military virtues well down the list. Germany is rarely the butt of cowardice jokes, however poorly it has done in the wars of the past century, and there are reasons for that. Although the author is a sociologist, his ideas are often intelligible.

Whatever the category, the author dismisses as nonsense the notion that ethnic jokes are a source of discord or animosity among people. On the contrary, Mr. Davies says, they reflect realities rather than incite or encourage hatreds. We can learn, he argues, many things about any society by studying the ethnic jokes told within it.

If ethnic jokes develop twists—for example, if the target is suddenly no longer merely stupid but is presented as criminal—then that is a warning sign, Mr. Davies suggests, that pressures within the society are becoming more bitter, and serious struggle or violence may result.

But not from the jokes, he insists, which merely reflect attitudes and values. In the case of anti-Jewish jokes, to give a powerful example, he says the jokes amount to nothing when compared to straight-on Jew-baiting. No jokes have influence comparable to *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* or *Mein Kampf*.

He does not address as directly or as fully as one might hope the anxiety felt by many Americans that ethnic jokes are serious assaults on minorities, but it is clear enough that he denigrates their impact or their importance, except as mirrors. Jokes may serve as a "balance," or a kind of escape valve for pressures. Mr. Davies evidently believes that nothing can or should be done about ethnic jokes except study them for what they reveal about a society that is otherwise hidden or denied.

Mr. Davies also points out that some of the jokes are funny and are told merely because people like jokes; they are not necessarily sinister. Often the person who tells an ethnic joke may have no animosity toward the ridiculed minority—may have affectionate feelings for it, even. But he will not esteem it.

One might laugh, I surmise, at the following without being anti–Roman Catholic: A Roman Catholic priest was stationed in some heathen cannibal land, where he was unable to effect utter righteousness, of course. Still, he made some progress. He got the natives to eat only fishermen on Friday.

In polite, Establishment circles it will never do to tell ethnic jokes, or at least not in public or where grungy newspaper reporters are within earshot. All the same, the high pieties of our national mores at the moment have little to do with reality, truth, or any other virtue except a herd instinct for conformity.

There is no doubt, however, that minorities targeted in jokes sometimes do feel acutely the putdown in ways that seem overly sensitive to those who tell the jokes. I once suggested we go through the calendar and designate a day or a week for vicious jokes about every identifiable group in the Republic, spreading and thereby lessening the pain felt by any particular group. But it never caught on. Mr. Davies argues, though not addressing my solution directly, that it never *will* catch on, because the jokes are not told at random, and there are clear reasons, however deplorable one may think them, why some groups are the butt of endless jokes while others are exempt. If you want to stop the jokes (and some have been dropped or have changed character) you have to change the realities of a society. This must mean that jokes about blacks, say, will change radically as that minority increases its financial, political, and cultural clout, but not before.

Altogether, the day of perfect brotherhood does not seem to be at hand, but Christie Davies says that's not the fault of jokes or joke-tellers. □

Applied Deconstruction

TERRY TEACHOUT

BRET EASTON ELLIS, it seems, was puzzled by the universally unfavorable reception of his third novel, *American Psycho*. Small wonder. Ellis's all-too-obvious purpose was to write a scathing satire of Eighties materialism that was politically correct in every possible way. Patrick Bateman, the narrator of *American Psycho*, is a Wall Street yuppie who watches pornographic videocassettes, calls blacks "niggers" and homosexuals "faggots," and gets his after-hours jollies by killing and dismembering people. Though most of his victims are women, Bateman is an equal-opportunity psychopath, for he also butchers an aging homosexual, a homeless man, and a dog. (The dog is a particularly nice touch.) Much to his surprise, Ellis ran afoul of the feminist wing of sensitivity fascism, and subsequently received the same treatment in the popular press that Bateman's girlfriends receive in *American Psycho*. Moral: In the Nineties, you can never be pure enough.

American Psycho, by Bret Easton Ellis (Vintage Contemporaries, 399 pp., paperback, $11)

At first, I actually felt a mild twinge of theoretical sympathy for Ellis, in much the same way that a softhearted member of the National Association of Scholars might pity an Ivy League leftist who inadvertently ran afoul of the PC police and suddenly discovered that his old friends wouldn't return his calls.

This sympathy lasted exactly as long as it took me to get through the first half-dozen pages of *American Psycho*. Every bad thing you've read about it is an understatement. It's ineptly written. It's sophomoric. It is, in the truest sense of the word, obscene. And the main charge of the feminists is right on the mark: Ellis describes the bestial acts committed by his card-

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Mr. Teachout is the author of City Limits: Memories of a Small-Town Boy, *due out in October from Poseidon. He is at work on a biography of H. L. Mencken.*

board hero in a way that is positively lascivious. One would hate to be his next date.

It would take more space than the task deserves to catalogue all of Ellis's myriad ineptnesses, but I'm especially struck by the utter incredibility of the events he describes. Though Patrick Bateman chops up one or two women, cabbies, and sushi delivery boys every week, his leisure-time activities attract little attention from the New York Police Department. And though he does his dirty work in a pair of Manhattan apartments, nobody ever hears any screaming and nobody ever smells anything funny.

Bateman himself is equally preposterous. A devoted *thirtysomething* fan who thinks Whitney Houston is "the most exciting and original black jazz voice of her generation," he is obsessed with upscale creature comforts (more products are identified by brand on an average page of *American Psycho* than in any chapter of *The Bonfire of the Vanities*) and with safe sex (I suspect Ellis thought this a positively Swiftian stroke of irony). A graduate of Exeter and Harvard, he displays a poster of Oliver North in his West Side apartment, and prefers *not* to blow away his girlfriends with Soviet-made automatic weapons. Anyone who knows anything about serial killers knows that all of this is perfect nonsense. They are weak, nondescript, maladjusted loners who kill women in order to satisfy their twisted sexual longings, not Masters of the Universe with a taste for human flesh.

Bret Easton Ellis would presumably argue that *American Psycho*, being a satire on the Reagan era, need not be overly literal. But having chosen to write his book in an ultra-naturalistic style, Ellis is stuck with the conventions of naturalism, which include a certain amount of surface plausibility, of which *American Psycho* has none whatsoever. In any case, Ellis undercuts his satirical intent by asserting (through the medium of an epigraph drawn from, of all people, Dostoyevsky) that "such persons . . . not only exist in our society, but indeed must exist, considering the circumstances under which our society has generally been formed." Sorry, but no sale. Manhattan may be crawling with serial killers, but I find it highly unlikely that any of them are doubling as investment bankers.

Janet Hamlin

It isn't hard to see why Ellis chose a serial killer as his subject. Serial murder is a theme of enormous literary potential, just as the psychopath is one of the great untapped character types. Its power is suggested by a number of purely popular novels about serial killers that are genuinely compelling, including Jim Thompson's *The Killer inside Me* and the novels of Thomas Harris, creator of Dr. Hannibal Lecter, America's hottest antihero. Harris's books are exceptionally interesting in this connection. Though they make no pretense to literary seriousness, *Red Dragon* and *The Silence of the Lambs* take seriously an issue that *American Psycho* ignores altogether: the question of evil. In *The Silence of the Lambs*, Dr. Lecter, a psychiatrist who kills and eats his patients when they become boring, refuses to allow his captors to explain him away with therapeutic clichés. "You can't reduce me to a set of influences," he says to Clarice Starling, the FBI trainee who asks him to fill out a questionnaire. "You've given up good and evil for behaviorism, Officer Starling. You've got everybody in moral dignity pants—nothing is ever anybody's fault. Look at me, Officer Starling. Can you stand to say I'm evil?"

By contrast, there is no moment in *American Psycho* where Bret Easton Ellis, who claims to be a serious artist, exhibits the workings of an adult moral imagination. It is as if he knows nothing of good and evil. If so, it wouldn't be surprising. Where, after all, would a novelist born in 1964, raised in Los Angeles, and educated at Bennington College have picked up such quaint bourgeois prejudices? No doubt Ellis spent his undergraduate years steeped in the modish brand of academic nihilism that goes by the name of "deconstruction," a school of criticism in which works of art are verbally hacked to pieces in order to prove that nothing means anything. He seems to have learned his lessons well, if a bit too literally. ☐

TELEVISION

Chatting with the Chief

RICHARD JOHN NEUHAUS

THE GENTLEMAN who was famous thirty years ago for saying that network television is a vast wasteland is still around, and I read in the papers that he said it again the other day. Not much has changed, except that thirty years later few thoughtful people expect television to be anything else. It has not, *inter alia*, revivified democratic participation, elevated public discourse, popularized the fine arts, or turned us into the caring global community that Edward R. Murrow so earnestly wanted us to become. And it almost certainly will not do any of those things in the future.

But some people keep trying, and maybe they deserve a measure of respect for that. Norman Lear, for example. Twenty years ago he favored us with *All in the Family*, a program determined to take on the *really big issues* such as racism, sexism, and related pathologies on the incorrect list. If, as media experts tell us, the result was to make respectable the endearing bigotries of Archie Bunker, that was not Mr. Lear's fault. Now Mr. Lear is trying again with several new series, of which *Sunday Dinner* has already premiered. I have previewed several episodes, and I do believe Norman Lear is on to something.

The main bit of information in the promotional materials for *Sunday*

Mr. Neuhaus is NR*'s Religion Editor.*

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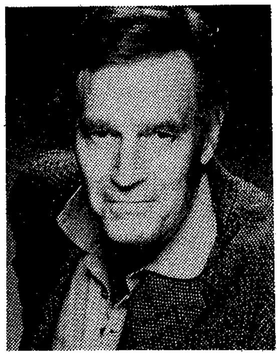

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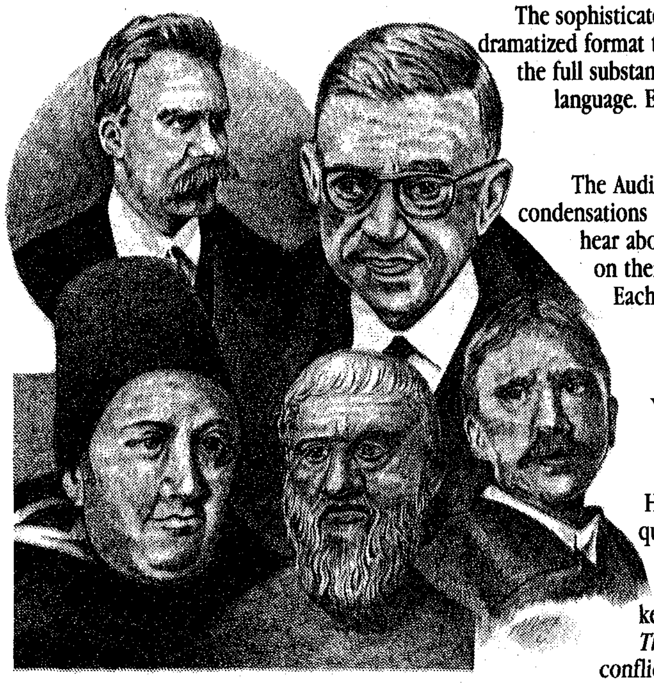

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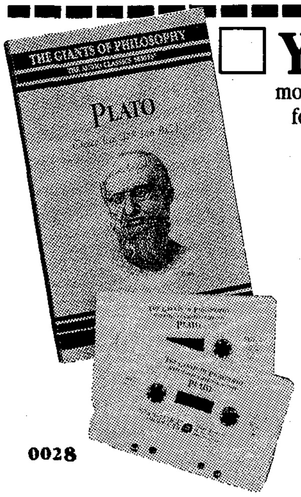

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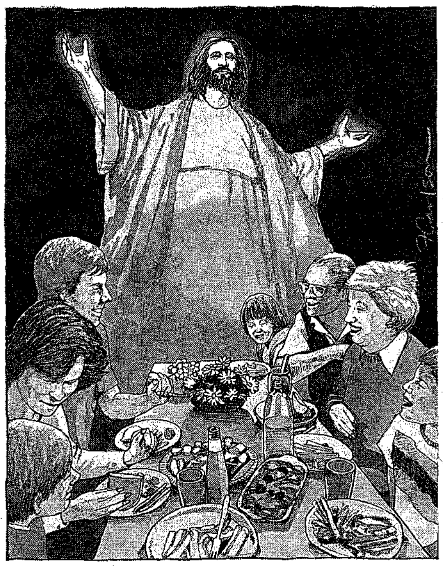
Dinner is the first situation comedy that tries to deal with religion as an integral part of the life of an American family. Religion, unlike incest, infanticide, and buggery, has generally been a taboo subject for network TV. One would never learn from watching television that more Americans go to church on any given Sunday of the year than attend all professional sports events combined in the entire year. The networks have assumed that religion is, as they say, a hot button, which to press is to alienate millions of viewers. Certainly, it was assumed, there is no way to be funny about religion, unless it is to lampoon fundamentalists and Catholics, who seem to be curiously conditioned to being ridiculed.

Norman Lear says he is trying something else. Understandably, some people are suspicious. The program was barely announced when one evangelical group threatened to boycott CBS and its advertisers unless the series was canceled. Our evangelical friends should lighten up and give the man a chance. To be sure, Norman Lear seems an unlikely person to give religion fair treatment in network entertainment. After all, he was, in the 1970s, the founder of People for the American Way, an organization that, despite intermittent lurches into sanity, is best known for its hysterical alarums about the threat that religion poses to our common life. Yet, in the last few years, Lear has been on the speaking circuit making intelligent noises about how schools, universities, and media have succumbed to a sterile and stifling secularism. What is missing, he opines, is "spirituality," and he thinks that has something to do with the unnatural silence about religion in what we like to think of as our public forums.

So it was with the intention of giving the man a chance that I previewed three episodes of *Sunday Dinner*. The situation in question is the Benedict family. Ben (played by Robert Loggia) is a 56-year-old businessman (in printing) with three late-twenties or thirty-something children, Diana, Vicky, and Kenneth, plus Diana's 12-year-old daughter, Rachel. Ben has been widowed for four years, and his large house is kept by his sister Martha. We are given to understand that this is, all in all, a very happy family. Until Ben introduces TT. That's her name, and she's played by Teri Hatcher. Ben met her while on vacation in Africa. The first episode is about his introducing her to the family and announcing that they are going to get married. Now the family is not very happy at all.

The program's promotional materials say that TT's "deep spiritual bent" throws the family into "distress and consternation." True, she is a little odd, but it is an oddity to which most people have been acculturated in recent decades. TT is an attorney who is deeply "into" matters environmental, espousing a "cosmic piety" about "the natural world that is our sacred community," and so forth. In times of crisis she goes into a corner to lift her eyes and talk to "The Chief," whom she describes as "He or She." After only thirty seconds or so of this sort of thing, she announces, "I feel better already." Prayer, if this be prayer, works, and works fast.


Fred Carlson

While TT's religion may seem a bit quirky, compared with Ben's children she is positively "centered," as they say in spirituality circles these days. Vicky, the oldest child, is a painfully high-strung and twice-divorced microbiologist who gets her consolations, such as they are, from her psychiatrist and her atheism. Kenneth has a hyperthyroid problem and jumps about a great deal while excitedly announcing ideas that will make him a billion dollars, if only his father will extend a small loan. Poor Diana has dragged her life through every fad and ferment of our Californicating culture, and comes across like Mary Hartman (an earlier Lear character) after a lobotomy.

Little Rachel, as is the case with most of the insufferable children on television, is much smarter than the adults, viewing their antics with distracted tolerance and getting off some good ones about the follies of the grownup world. Aunt Martha, on the other hand, is attractively, well, normal. The press release says she "is not only strongly opinionated but also religiously conservative." I don't know about that, but we are given to understand that she actually goes to church, and the suggestion is that she worships Someone less cutely contrived than TT's "Chief." Aunt Martha even wears a cross, thus introducing to the series the only sign of a readily identifiable religion, apart from a passing reference to Diana's once wanting to be a nun and having cohabited with a Reform rabbi.

As for Ben himself, he has not been religiously sensitized, although TT has high hopes for raising his consciousness. If she has her way, he too will one day chat with The Chief. Meanwhile, he loves her truly, madly, deeply, and gushingly. There is abundant and predictable drollery about what a 56-year-old does or tries to do in bed with his "bimbo" (Diana's term for TT). The Chief obviously does not mind that Ben and TT are living together before marriage. Ben's aging body does mind, however, when he overdoes it with TT and comes down with a hernia. Confined to the sickbed, he turns out to be a perfectly awful patient—crotchety, demanding, and downright abusive. At the end of the third episode, however, TT is successfully laying on therapy about the evils of his vanity and the healing powers of love. The viewer just knows that Ben is on his way to being born again by immersion in cosmic piety.

Of course *Sunday Dinner* is silly. But it is silly in a pleasant sort of way. The episodes that I saw are hardly the portent of any revolution in the networks' treatment of religion. In fact, after the first episode, in which all present get their religious agendas on the table, as it were, religion of any sort seems to become less of a factor.

And Mr. Lear may be running into his Archie Bunker problem again. In the second episode this beastly British billionaire, Donald Baskam, shows up for dinner. Scandalizing TT and the children, he delivers an eloquent encomium to the divine order of things in which man dominates the creation and, among other things, kills calves early to get the most tender veal. He excoriates the hypocrisy of the others who shed compassionately correct tears for the living things that they, too, inevitably exploit.

At the end of this speech, the audience, which we are told is live, enthusiastically applauds. After that, Ben looks like a wimp when he panders to the sentimentality of the kids and indignantly throws Baskam out of the house for his alleged insensitivity. Baskam, like Bunker, makes his case altogether too well. One assumes that Baskam's is not the message that Mr. Lear intended. But we may be permitted to entertain the intriguing possibility, however unlikely, that Norman Lear has been playing ideological double games all along.

Others will do as they wish, but I cannot work up much enthusiasm for boycotting CBS because of *Sunday Dinner*. Given the genre, it is more amusing and intelligent than most. Networks are businesses with the driving purpose of selling things to large audiences. Perhaps someday there will be a series that both is commercially successful and portrays a more orthodox Christianity or Judaism in a way that is truer to the experience of most Americans. It has not been done to date. Meanwhile, *Sunday Dinner* is a sympathetic portrayal of religion-in-general, along with some kinky variations.

Who knows? It might even for some viewers provoke questions of spiritual consequence. God, we are very reliably informed, can use even chic chatter about cosmic piety to lead people toward more substantive truth. And I do not really think He is offended by being addressed as Chief. He must be accustomed to human inanities by now. Of course, this relatively benign assessment of *Sunday Dinner* may indicate that this reviewer is accustomed to them as well, perhaps too accustomed. There was a time when I too might have been outraged. But that was before we fully appreciated the limits of the wasteland that is television. In any event, those who are in search of authentic religion should turn off the entertainment and go to church. If they can find a church that isn't in the process of turning itself into entertainment. ☐

FILM

Sicilian and Half Sicilian

JOHN SIMON

WHEN did we catch on that movies were really worse than ever? Was it only yesterday? Or a few years ago? Or back when they came up with the slogan that they were better than ever? Or are we all just incurable *laudatores tempori acti*, mindlessly exalting time past? I don't have the exact answer, but I do know that good movies, American or foreign, are these days in a class with the teeth of hens, and those fowls seem more edentate than ever.

Take as a typical example ***Only the Lonely***, whose very title is doggerel, an earsore. Written and directed by Chris Columbus, a product of Steven Spielberg's Pandora's box, it is clearly meant to be for both old and young, funny yet also serious, entertainment that also provides a lesson. It is indeed all of those things on the lowest, most dishonest and stupid level. And it gets a highly favorable review in our newspaper of supposed record, the *New York Times*.

It is the story of Danny, a nice Irish-American cop, whom everyone on his beat, as the opening sequence makes perspicuous, simply loves. He seems to enjoy his work, which is seldom more demanding or perilous than driving, with his oversexed partner, some harmlessly droll malefactors to the hoosegow. He has two problems in life. One, explicit and the hinge of the plot; the other, implicit and barely alluded to. The first, then, is that he lives with his formidable widowed mother, Rose, who keeps him a baby: immature, cringing, bullied, enslaved. Hers. And

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Mr. Simon, NR*'s film critic, is also theater critic for* New York *magazine.*

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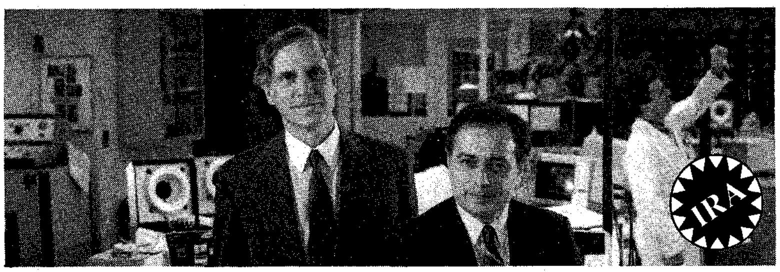

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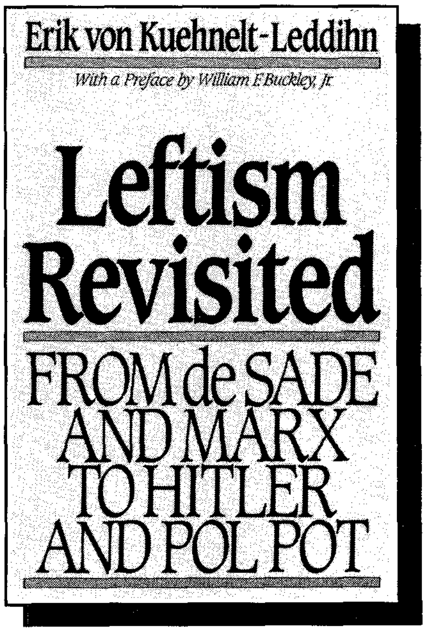
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With a Preface by William F. Buckley, Jr.
Leftism Revisited
FROM de SADE AND MARX TO HITLER AND POL POT

she is one of those nasty Irish Catholics full of every prejudice that condition is allegedly heir to, and well disliked by all but the nice gardener who lives downstairs and hopelessly loves her, only to be despised by Rose because he is Greek and is, for the same reason, ineluctably named Nick.

The more skirted problem is that Danny is hugely, monstrously fat. And his mother encourages him to eat like a whole stableful of horses, and remain fat and bypassed by other women: calories are a mother's best friend. After all, who else would take her to her weekly bingo sessions even while he yearns for a baseball game? Certainly not his married brother, Patrick, who plans to relocate Danny and Rose in Florida, and be rid of all responsibility to Mum.

But when Doyle, a friendly old bachelor and drinking companion at the local pub, dies without having much to show for his life, the Italian-American undertaker's daughter appears at the funeral. Theresa is a shy, homely young woman, a wallflower in aspect and anaphrodisiac calling: she cosmeticizes the dead, trying, imaginatively, to make them look as much as possible like the movie star they most resembled, to which end she uses freeze frames on her VCR as her model. Danny and Theresa exchange one wistful glance, and a *carpe diem* kind of light goes on in his head.

When, an inveterate Jonah with the ladies, he asks Theresa out on a date, Danny begins by offering her a multiple choice of excuses for turning him down: you have to wash your hair, have your legs waxed, baby-sit for a relative, and some half-dozen more. All she needs do is check one. But she doesn't, and they have a date, over Rose's strenuous disapproval. Especially after Rose learns that the girl is Italian, even half Sicilian, which means everything of Danny's she may touch must be wiped twice. The reference is to the evening picnic he takes her on in Comiskey Park (the locale is Chicago), where they eat and drink on the middle of the diamond while a nice old black man who runs the electronic scoreboards puts on a *lumière sans son* show for them.

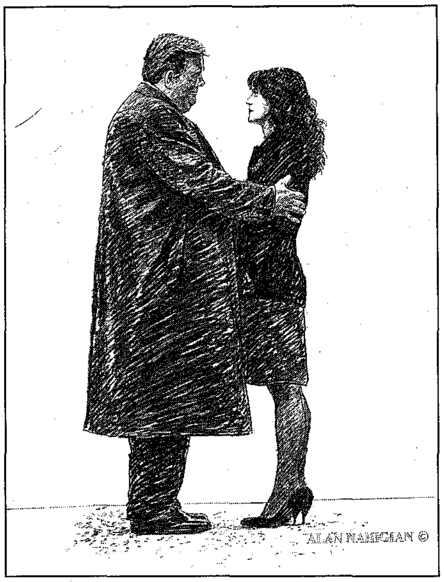
Before you (and I) dissolve in all this goo, let's take a breather. Danny may be the most obese cop in the world (do they allow that, by the way?), but he is played by the public's darling, John

Candy. Not mine, however. Aside from not being a fatty lover, I find the actor, with his close-set eyes, dishonest-baby face, and faintly imbecile look when trying to be dear, deeply distasteful. Ally Sheedy, however, as Theresa, is charming, attractive, alert-looking, anything but the loser she is supposed to be; so, right here, the film is flagrantly cheating. The worst indictment of Theresa that Rose comes up with is to call her flat-chested to her face, or to her chest, which, despite clever costuming, is manifestly gibbous. As for Rose's nastiness, tyranny, and name-calling, it is all rather sub-Archie Bunker; let's face it, she is pretty much a paper termagant.

But back to our story. After the second date, Theresa is only too eager to spend the night with Danny, and what with Rose away and not supposed to return till late tomorrow, the affair is happily consummated. We are mercifully spared the least glimpse of maiden and hippo in bed (here adult viewers, even more than children, are the beneficiaries of self-censorship), but Rose returns early, and frantic stratagems are required to sneak Theresa out unseen; Danny's girth for once comes in handy as a shield to hide behind. Concealed, Theresa hears Rose refer to her as a dago.

Nevertheless, before we know it, wedding bells are in the offing, until, at a prenuptial ceremony, Rose makes a speech stopping everything. But, with astonishing rhetoric, she revokes her exordium with a prompt palinode, and everyone breathes easy. Then, however, everything goes haywire anyway, but you don't want details, do you? At film's end, just as Danny and Rose are being bundled off to St. Pete by brother Patrick, Danny learns that Theresa is on the New York–bound train in search of a long-dreamt-of career as a show-biz make-up artist. Another light goes on in Danny's rather underlit head, and, as a cop, he heads off the train at the pass, as it were, orders all the passengers out of it, then corners Theresa with a renewed marriage proposal. Again he trots out the multiple-choice rejections for her, omitting only one: that he is a gross, weak, hag-ridden, bloated behemoth who has let Theresa down repeatedly, and will doubtless go on doing so, Rose or no Rose.

Which reminds me of a running gag I forgot to mention. Danny keeps having these fantasies, acted out on screen, of Rose being raped, murdered, or worse because he failed to walk her home from somewhere, and reproaching him with a dying zinger. At such times he drops everything and rushes to the nearest phone to check up on her. Well now, as Theresa is saying yes, we see Rose on the Florida plane, and next to her, to her surprise and wrath, the amorous Nick, on whom Danny bestowed his ticket. But when some swarthy, sinister, and heavily armed hijackers attempt to commandeer the aircraft, who should disarm and subdue them but Nick and Rose, the future playmates of St. Pete?



Alan Nahigian

I am not sure whether this scene represents Danny's final, liberating fantasy or something more. But what matter? *Only the Lonely* is clearly the yearly, monthly, weekly fantasy Hollywood unleashes, unredeemed by a trace of genuine empathy, insight, style, or wit. Miss Sheedy gives a finely shaded performance, too intelligent for its ambiance; Maureen O'Hara, her five-alarm hair unquenched, gutters on beneath it as Rose; Anthony Quinn, as Nick, supplies the dying gasps—or outtakes—of Zorba; and Milo O'Shea provides Danny with an according-to-Hoyle foil as Doyle. John Candy, though, is less than dandy, a piece of dead meat pounding the beat of Chris Columbus's bankrupt imagination. *Only the Lonely* is not just a bust, it's the pits.

■ The Europeans have troubles of their own. They are still, now and then, trying to make adult movies, but they seem to be losing the knack—perhaps under the steamroller of Americanization that grinds on, making American pictures by far the most popular wherever the U.S.A. is still Utopia, which, truth to tell, is pretty nearly everywhere. As a result, the current European formula is to make films that still have touches that murmur Art, but surround them with a stew that comfortingly burbles Commerce.

Giuseppe Tornatore, who made the insufferably sentimental Oscar-winner *Cinema Paradiso*, is back with ***Everybody's Fine*** (*Stanno tutti bene*), starring Marcello Mastroianni as Matteo, a 74-year-old retired civil servant in Sicily, who talks to his dead wife, Angela, as though she were still alive. Films whose protagonists conduct dialogues with the dead constitute a subgenre to be shunned.

Matteo's five grown sons and daughters lead busy, ostensibly thriving, lives on the mainland, and have no time for papa. He puts up beachside bungalows for their summer holidays, but the *disgraziati* don't even bother to call—never mind write—to say they can't make it. Still self-deluded, Matteo resolves to travel north and surprise them in their five respective cities. The film thus becomes a medi-

(Continues on page 53)

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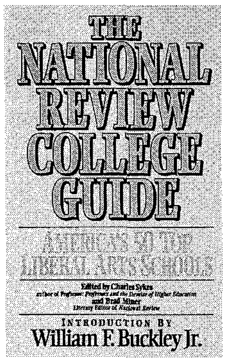

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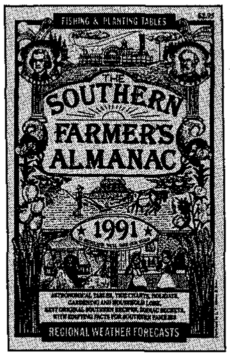
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SIMON

(Continued from page 51)

tation on a hustling, desperate, confused, and dissembling Italy.

In Naples, son Alvaro is nowhere to be found, barely even in the computer of the university where he teaches; only his phone answering machine dispenses ghostly messages. In Rome, son Canio pretends to be a serious political contender, but is actually a lowly Communist Party hack. A mugger robs Matteo and smashes the camera containing the pictures the old man has promised Angela he'd bring back for her. Still, his obsession to reunite his family around a dinner table continues unabated. In Florence, the beautiful Tosca (Matteo, an opera lover, has given all his children operatic names) is not a successful actress, but mostly a model for pornoid cameras; her elegant apartment is really her ex-lover's, who wants it back; the baby of a friend, which Tosca looks after, is really, albeit illegitimately, her own.

Matteo doesn't cotton on to any of this. He journeys on to Milan, and meets on the train an exquisite older woman (Michèle Morgan, as fine as ever), has a sweetly melancholy time with her, and ignores her advice to give up on his children as she has on hers. He travels on alone, congratulating himself on having remained, as he puts it, faithful to Angela. In Milan, Guglielmo is not a successful concert artist, but a humble percussionist in a marginal orchestra. His 15-year-old son, at least, is unevasive enough to admit getting his girlfriend pregnant. In Turin, Norma is not the big phone-company executive, but a mere telephone operator, her marriage a shambles. At the festive dinner Matteo throws for all in Rome, only Canio and Guglielmo show up, and finally admit their cover-up: Alvaro has actually committed suicide—something Matteo can't bring himself to believe.

The point here—conveyed in part through flashbacks, dreams, fantasies—is that Matteo (Italy) won't face the truth even when hit in the face by it. The story, if it weren't so mechanistic, might just barely work, but the attempt to revivify it with mildly surrealist touches and faintly absurdist humor merely reminds us how much not only such stories, but also the strategies for their updating, have aged and paled.

Aged, too, has poor Mastroianni, whose very real charm now seems a bit sweaty under the collar. The supporting cast is undistinguished, although Valeria Cavali, as Tosca, is quietly enchanting. Tornatore's dialogue, on which everybody's perennial collaborator, Tonino Guerra, duly collaborated, is routine stuff, not helped by Blasco Giurato's boilerplate cinematography. Another very old hand, Ennio Morricone, managed some still respectable, but by now second-best, background music. Sad. ☐

ON THE RIGHT / Wm. F. Buckley Jr.

Most Unfavored Nation

NEW YORK, MAY 29

It is a pity that the phrase is "Most Favored Nation." So long as the present regime is in power, it hurts to think of China as—a favored nation. And it's true that in the very recent past we have expressed ourselves toward hostile nations by withholding from them Most Favored Nation status. Two decades ago Senator Henry Jackson and Congressman Charles Vanick instituted in respect of the Soviet Union the rule: No Most Favored Nation for you, so long as you refuse to permit free emigration of racial or religious minorities.

At the time, Henry Kissinger opposed the sanction, obviously for pragmatic reasons. He was as much in favor of free emigration for Russian Jews as anyone, but he thought it unwise to fix the economic sanction to a single goal, when it could be used with more flexibility in general diplomatic bargaining.

We hold to the theoretical axiom (empirically validated) that when two countries trade openly with each other, they both prosper—because the United States is better at making cars, and Guatemala is better at making bananas. A corollary of this rule is that in order to bargain with Guatemala for its bananas, it becomes necessary to travel there and to trade with banana growers, and that economic intercourse is something of a cultural conduit, introducing efficiency, market mechanisms, and knowledge to both societies.

Now, if a country is waging aggressive diplomacy against us, it does not make very good sense to engage in economic relations of a kind that help it out. But we must acknowledge that in refusing to help it, we are also hurting ourselves.

We could, at least in the short run, have done most damage to the Soviet Union during the cold war by refusing to sell wheat. But when Mr. Reagan became President, the first thing he did was end the wheat embargo imposed by Jimmy Carter in retaliation against the Soviet Army's Afghan venture. Mr. Reagan's reasoning was that in fairly short order, other suppliers would fill U.S. shoes in selling wheat to the Soviet Union. And that the special burden on the American farmer was inordinate. President Reagan could of course have coped with the second problem by subsidizing the U.S. farmer. But there was never any way to persuade the free world to turn down an opportunity to sell excess wheat.

The decision made by Mr. Bush to recommend Most Favored Nation low-tariff trade with the Chinese is based on his feeling that we are net better off cultivating economic ties than cutting them off. Recent developments in respect of Taiwan suggest an easing of pressures in that part of the world, and it is true that almost everybody is waiting around for the Old Old Guard in China to die, after which the momentum of Tiananmen Square may reassert itself. The economic impact of the decision is measured by the figures. In 1983, we exported to China $2.1 billion in goods. That figure rose in 1990 to $4.8 billion—not a big rise, given the inflated dollar. The Chinese, on the other hand, in 1983 exported $2.3 billion, and last year the figure rose to $15.2 billion. It is obviously of considerable economic consequence to the Chinese to continue to take advantage of MFN, which however does not mean that were we to deny it to them, they would pay the price of instituting political and economic liberty.

It is amusing to see Senator George Mitchell trying to act like St. George out to slay the dragon. If any Communist since the time of Stalin has suffered from any policy initiated by George Mitchell, that Communist ought to be exhibited in the Smithsonian. Mr. Mitchell finds the China question a useful tool to use against George Bush. It may be that Mr. Bush is wrong in opting for the free-trade alternative, but it does not follow from his doing so that he is indifferent to the cause of human freedom. ☐

YOU CAN ALWAYS TELL WHEN ELROY IS ANGRY – HE BRISTLES!
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Televise Executions?

NEW YORK, MAY 20

The furor over station KQED's demand to televise the forthcoming execution at San Quentin begins, in most cases, by missing the point of the request. KQED (San Francisco) is not involved in tabloid journalism. It is, rather, engaged in ideological journalism. Its point is that the horror will be brought home to those who actually view the extinction of a human life, and that that horror will promote the cause of abolition.

A second school of thought reasons differently: its notion is that the more publicity given to executions, the greater the impact on potential criminals. If they actually witness a man dying, they are less likely to risk its happening to them. There are subtleties in this position for several reasons. The first, that we are now talking either about people who have already killed, and seen men die; or about prospective killers. These last come in two varieties. The first is the killer of passion, the kind who takes a rifle from the family wall and plugs the man who is sleeping with his wife. These are not very often sent to the chair or the gas chamber. The second variety is the professional killers. It seems unlikely that they will experience any special sensation on seeing yet one more killing, this time one for which they happen not to be responsible. The way to affect this class of killers is to increase greatly the rate at which men and women guilty of first-degree murder are executed. As things now stand, the chance of a killer getting executed is on the order of 1 in 2,000. Punishment, as most penologists repeat and repeat, is effective less with reference to its severity, than to its predictability.

That leaves the question of non-killers. If there were an execution scheduled, would you tune in to see it?

My own answer is: Yes, I would. But I am ambivalent on the point. There is a good reason for expanding human experience, a mandate that lies especially hard on journalists and other writers.

The late William Allen White of Kansas, a great reporter, writer, and human being, undertook when a young man, but too old to be drafted, to endure every month a different ordeal of the kind men in the service were confronted with and to write a feature piece on the experience for the *Reader's Digest*. So . . . in January he would jump from a plane with a parachute; in February, do the North Atlantic run through German U-boat territory; in March, trek across the desert with full field pack; (the most harrowing experience, he told me, was coming up an escape chute from a beached submarine). His experience is a metaphor for expanded understanding of all the strains of life. Henry Luce took a micro-mini-milligram of LSD to see what the sensation was all about, and I have done as much with marijuana. Sensible psychic explorers draw the line at cocaine, because to experiment with it is on the order of experimenting with Russian roulette: the first snort may be the one that addicts you.

So there is the case for seeing and doing everything, to enhance the keenness of life. On the other hand, the fruits of direct experience are often exaggerated. Most of what we know, we know from reading. I have sometimes been told that I cannot understand poverty, never having experienced it, to which I reply that that must have been the reason why Gibbon wrote so superficially about life in the Roman Empire. All of us see men shot ten times a month, on television or at the movies. Mostly it is fictional shoot-'em-ups; but often we are seeing battle scenes, and the man falling under fire is actually dying in front of your eyes, though there was perhaps an interval of a few hours between the time the cameraman took the picture, and the time the transmission of it reached you.

By and large, I'd guess that the most persuasive argument would ban televising executions. Perhaps there are out there those who would view the episode with macabre delight, and conceivably an unhealthy passion might be kindled that would lead to dirty business. Whether there would be a compensating number of people who might swear off killing, or resist a disposition to kill, one can't know. And then, too, there is something to be said for the rights of the most directly aggrieved. Most states permit a surviving family member to witness the event. Colonel Lindbergh and his wife were invited to the execution of the man who (allegedly) kidnapped and killed their son: they declined.

The case will go to the Supreme Court, which will be under conflicting pressures. The Freedom of Information types will be in favor of access to the gas chamber, but since most of them are abolitionists, they will experience pain in making up their minds. That's good. ☐

The Call for Counter-Terrorism

NEW YORK, MAY 24

It greatly surprised many casual book-jacket kibitzers to see the name of Eugene Genovese on the cover of Dinesh D'Souza's book, *Illiberal Education*. This is the best-seller exposing the extraordinary practices in modern colleges in pursuit of political correctness. Mr. Genovese is, or was until recently, a Marxist. He refers to NATIONAL REVIEW, the New Testament of the Right, as a "satanic organ," though perhaps he is teasing. Still, he is profoundly a man of the Left, and here he is, in a full-blown review for *The New Republic*, saying about a book by a young conservative, "Academic freedom and indeed the very soul of American education are succumbing to a sinister McCarthyite assault of unprecedented proportions. With admirable . . . civility, D'Souza has written an informative account that provides a rare combination of tough-minded analysis, principled judgments, thoughtful proposals, and a humane sensitivity."

What especially attracts Mr. Genovese in *Illiberal Education* is the book's effort to train its sights less on dumb ideologists—the kind of people who gave us affirmative action—than on their appeasers. For instance, the college administrators who put up with affirmative action though they know full well what happens. What happens is that a black student qualified for College B is admitted to College A, in which he is lost and either flunks out, quits, or digs in as a kind of permanent Resistance. Meanwhile, the student qualified for College C is admitted to College B and the same things happen. Etc. "In these [foolish] matters, as in others, Harvard, led by Derek Bok, strives mightily to be No. 1." The reference is not only to affirmative action, but to collateral damage as well. For instance, the persecution at Harvard of Professor Stephan Thernstrom, for the sin of talking about Jim Crow and about slavery in the South descriptively, rather than proscriptively. And then there was the professor who assigned a film in which a black maid appeared. "He was forced to cancel its screening, since blacks should not be shown in such jobs."

Mr. Genovese has several suggestions to make. Listen.

"A university president who negotiates with storm troopers who have occupied any part of his campus, much less his own office, should be fired. But first we must do our best to save all such quivering time-servers from themselves. To that end, I offer the Law of Liberation through Counterterror: In every such political struggle, honorable men and women can defeat terrorism only by unleashing counterterrorism against cowardly administrators and their complicit faculty. Of course, we must obey this law in a humane spirit, for the purpose of liberating these benighted souls to realize their own inner wills. Like loving parents, we must accept the disagreeable duty to inflict excruciating pain on ourselves by whipping our errant children for their own good."

Mr. Genovese, who obviously learned something from the rhetoric and rhythm of Marxism, thinks the time has ended when colleges should tolerate student (or faculty) lawlessness. Those who, like President Donald Kennedy of Stanford, tolerate the occupation of their offices by student protestors are "hypocrites who preach diversity and practice totalitarianism . . . cowards, whores, and rogues. Let us, then, drive into their brains the terrifying recognition that counter-terrorists will (figuratively) draw their blood for every concession made to terrorists; that administrators who deftly avoid calls for their ouster from the one side will face such calls from the other side; that, . . . despite every smart move known to God and man, they will find no place to hide from any war that the terrorists unleash."

That is tough talk, but it is, really, bracing. How long is it possible for a society that esteems itself to tolerate "students" who dismiss Shakespeare on the grounds that he was writing for white people? Is a society aesthetically whole, when student newspapers, eschewing fundamental euphonics, refer to first-year students as "freshpersons"? Can we be at peace with ourselves when, as Mr. D'Souza confirms about Berkeley, a black with an A– high-school record and a 1200 SAT score has a 100 per cent chance of getting into the freshman class, while an Asian-American (D'Souza himself is Indian) or white with an identical record has a 5 per cent chance?

The college question is coming to a boil. And the language of such as Eugene Genovese makes it plain that this is a fight of the Right and of the Left against the knownothingism of the Nineties. ☐

(Universal Press Syndicate)

OFF THE RECORD

Gays Bashing. Pat Buchanan's long record of taking on homosexual activists has apparently made him the target of a telephone-based gay *jihad*. In the April 3 issue of the gay magazine *Outweek*, editor-at-large Michelangelo Signorile—apoplectic over Buchanan's *New York Post* piece blasting gays for disrupting the St. Patrick's Day parade [see "Sodom and Begorrah," *NR*, April 29]—printed the columnist's home number and urged "queers" to "ZAP BUCHANAN!" by calling to "leave him a sweet message." Several evidently did.

Mr. Signorile does not mince words about Mr. Buchanan: "It's hard to refrain from taking this man by the throat and squeezing as hard as you can while you look into his ugly, disgusting face and watch the eyeballs burst and pop out of their sockets. Or maybe you feel like stepping on his face and squishing his demented brain until the rot oozes out of it and onto the pavement. I have no problem with imagining violence against this wacko . . ." Enough. Cato suggests that Mr. Buchanan should report it as a hate crime and hit *Outweek* with a harassment suit.

Senator Too Busy. Minnesota-based trade associations are griping all over Capitol Hill about the treatment they're getting from freshman Democratic Senator Paul Wellstone. In any state there are certain bread-and-butter constituencies that congressmen deal with regularly—state bankers, farmers, utilities, etc.

All but Wellstone, that is. Typical is the story Cato heard about officials from the Lincoln Pipestone Rural Water System. Here in Washington to get help for an expansion project in one of the state's more depressed areas, they found their repeated requests for a meeting with the senator were rebuffed; he was "too busy." The officials then asked to meet with someone on Wellstone's staff, only to get the same answer. But the officials kept at it, and because of their persistence they were finally informed that a Wellstone staffer would pencil them in one afternoon—from 4:00 to 4:02 P.M.

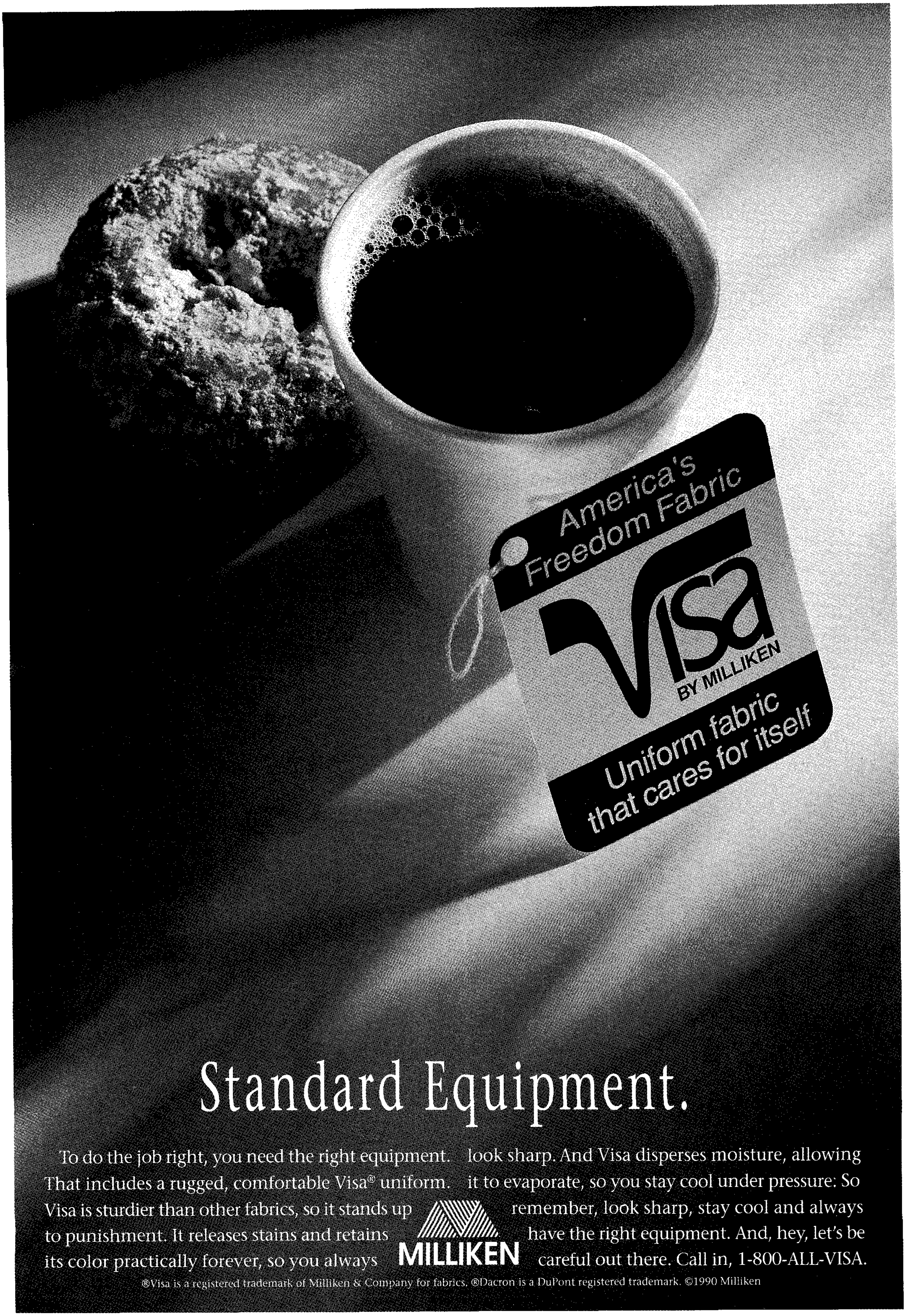
Baltic Intrigue. In late May the Western media reported that the Soviets had attacked customs posts in both Latvia and Lithuania. As *NR* goes to press, however, what has yet to be reported is that 48 hours after the assault on the customs posts, the Soviet military effectively sealed off the Latvian capital of Riga by taking up key positions throughout the city. Best guesses are that this is less an attempt to seize the government than to intimidate the Baltic states and to test Western resolve. In addition, Moscow canceled talks between the Soviet and Latvian delegations scheduled for the day the border attacks occurred. Latest word is that the talks are rescheduled for June 6—the day Gorbachev will be in Oslo to collect his Nobel Peace Prize.

NO COMPLAINING
SCHOCHET

Burn, Baby, Burn. A month after riots hit the Mount Pleasant and Adams Morgan sections of the nation's capital, the press has had a field day reporting on the rift between the area's Hispanic (largely Salvadoran) residents and the (largely black) D.C. police force. Yet there's another twist that has as yet gone unmentioned: a local cabbie brought it into the open by saying the disturbances was caused by "*guerrilleros*." The credibility of this theory rests not only on the proportion of illegal Salvadorans in the area but also on the method of attack. Many disguised their identities by cutting out eye holes in their T-shirts and pulling them over their heads; some destroyed cars by shoving flares down gas tanks; and there was at least one report of people attacking and retreating on cue from a whistle. Not exactly a spontaneous uprising.

Short Takes. Now that Henry Hyde has brought the issue of race-norming into the open [see "And Now for Something Completely Different," p. 23], 15 congressmen have written to Labor Secretary Lynn Martin asking her for statistics on the number of people "who were tested and denied job opportunities because of race-norming since 1981." . . . Representative Pat Schroeder (D., Colo.) came one step closer to dressing American women in olive drab when she attached an amendment to this year's defense authorization bill stripping away congressional bans on women flying Air Force and Army combat missions—an amendment passed with no debate on the floor and only a voice vote in a closed-door session of the Armed Services Committee. . . . In the May/June issue of *Mother Jones*, Representative George Miller (D., Calif.), a leader in the effort to make sure American kids don't stay home with mom, confesses that he "spent eight years getting the child-care bill passed in Congress, and at its zenith there was never a child-care movement in this country." . . . Finally, Cato hears that as late as two weeks before a recent fund-raiser for the Manchester, N.H., Republican Party, the group had only sold 35 tickets to hear special guest speaker John Sununu, clearly no prophet in his own land.

—Cato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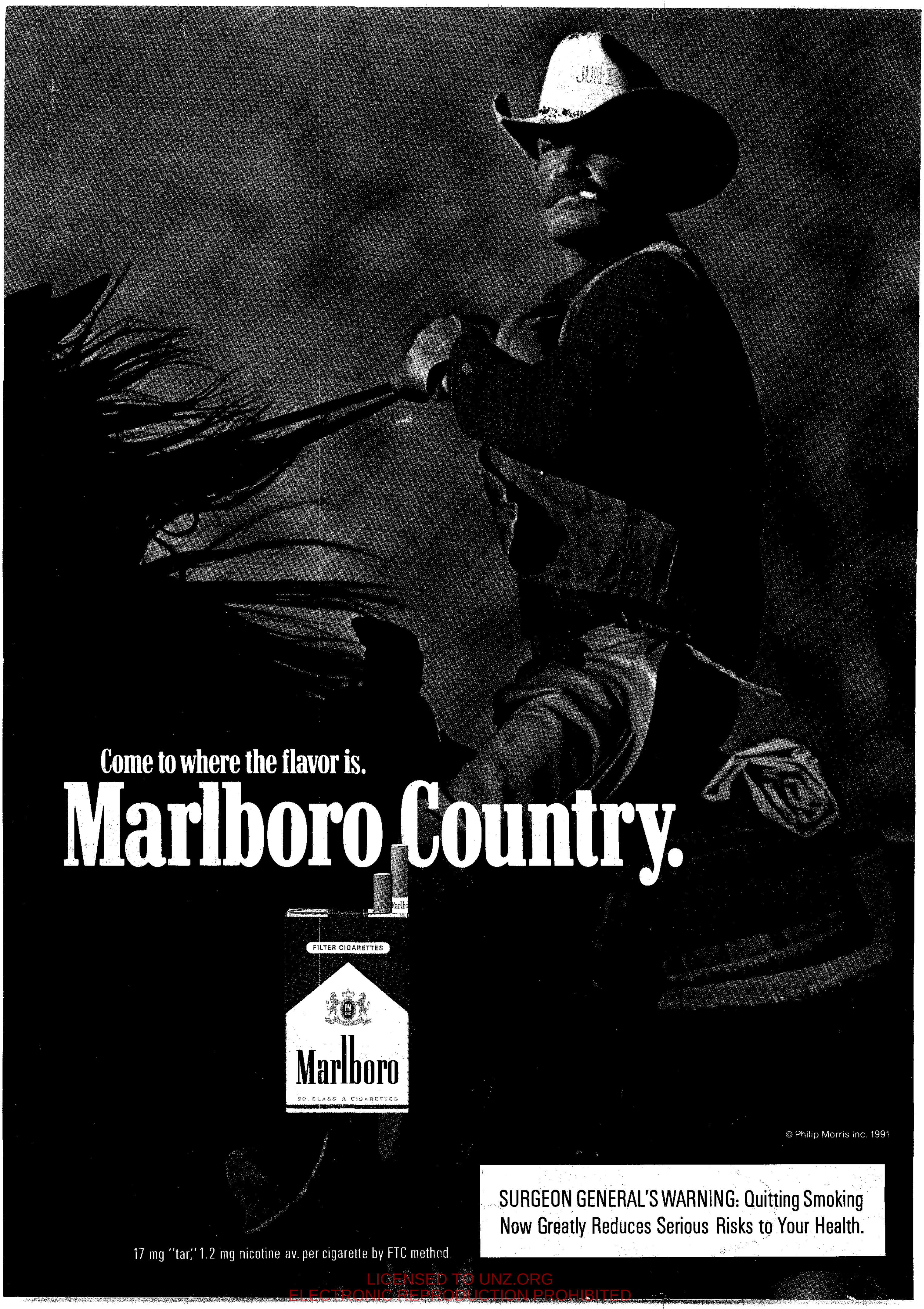
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